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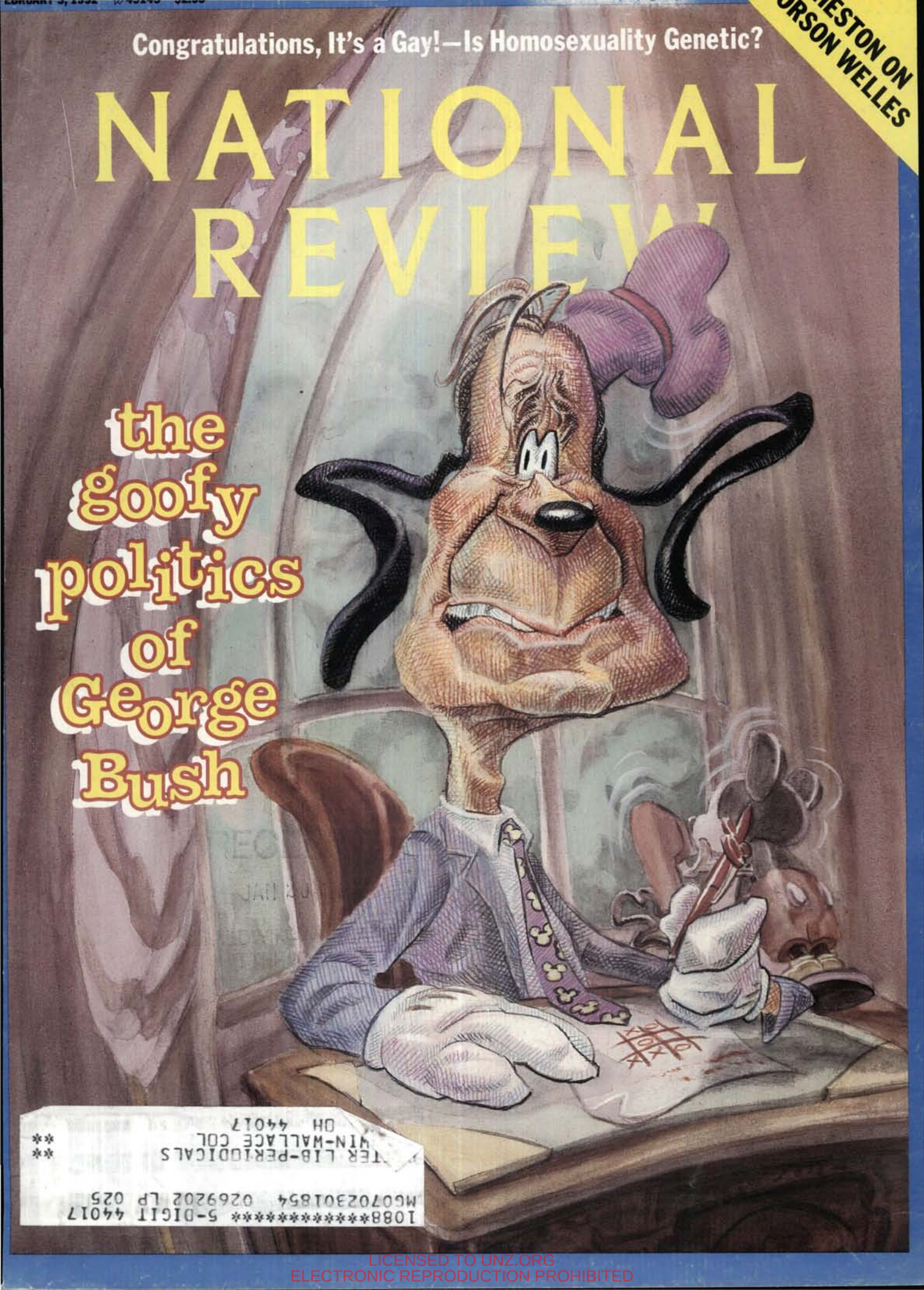

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NATIONAL REVIEW

FEBRUARY 3, 1992 VOL. XLIV, NO. 2

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How does a man with the acumen to capture the Presidency manage strategic bumbles such as the budget deal and the quota bill? **John O'Sullivan** argues that George Bush does have a fine sense of the domestic political landscape—circa 1962. . . . The Japan trip suggests to **William McGurn** that Bush's domestic incoherence is now confusing his foreign policies.

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IN OVER 30 YEARS AS A PROFESSIONAL GOLFER, Chi Chi Rodriguez has won many titles.

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A foundation which has grown to become a model for child welfare organizations across the country.

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"What we aim to do is get these kids before they get into real trouble. To show them real alternatives to crime, drugs and life on the streets.

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CHI CHI RODRIGUEZ,
Pro Golfer.

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them with a perfect role model. He's living proof that no matter how hard your background has been, you can always rise above it; that in life, unlike golf, no obstacle is immovable."

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We asked the proud "Uncle" if there was any secret formula for the foundation's remarkable success story.

Chi Chi thinks for a minute, then leans forward to tell a story.

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"So every night when he came home from work he would cut down only one single piece of bamboo at a time.

"The very next spring, there was corn on the Rodriguez table."

Chi Chi looks up just in time to see a ten-year-old girl sink a perfect putt.

"That's the only secret of our success. If you really want something and you're prepared to work hard for it, then little by little, one by one, miracles will happen."

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For more information on the Chi Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation contact: Development Office Chi Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation, Inc., 3030 McMullen-Booth Road, Clearwater, FL 34621

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LETTERS

Good News, Bad News

I must take exception to Mark Cunningham's suggestion ["A Boston Massacre," Nov. 18] that the *Boston Globe*'s coverage of the Joachim Maître story was driven by some vendetta against Mr. Maître's "spreading of incorrect thought." We pursued the Maître story because it was a good news story—a high-profile figure in a major breach of academic conduct—and not for any political reason. Mr. Cunningham's suggestion to the contrary impugns my integrity and that of the *Globe*.

If fairness is the issue here, why wasn't I afforded a chance to defend myself? Mr. Cunningham interviewed me by telephone for thirty minutes, yet I am not quoted once in the two-page article.

An important fact was also conveniently overlooked in Mr. Cunningham's dramatic build-up to a comparison with Clarence Thomas. It concerns the notion that Maître didn't really steal Michael Medved's intellectual property, but simply forgot to attribute it to Medved.

This might be an acceptable explanation if Maître had read the entire article verbatim, but he did not. He regularly interjected phrases such as "I think" and "This is what I call . . ." before reading Medved's observations. Before reading Medved's reactions to the film *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover*, Maître said, "That looked like a pretty good lineup to me so I went." It turns out Maître had never even seen the film.

Maître took Medved's words and made them appear to be his own. He did it while reading from an article about standards and morality. He did it as the dean of a college accountable to the basic ethical principles of academe.

For the record, let me also correct one other product of Mr. Cunningham's sloppy research: his statement that six of the stories about Maître "were page one, not something you get a lot of on the higher-education beat." This may be true at other papers, but at the *Globe* higher-education stories routinely appear on the front page.

Anthony Flint
The Boston Globe
Boston, Mass.

Since my piece is not *an attack on Mr. Flint, even such choice quotes as his explanation of the art of relying exclusively on hostile sources got cut for space considerations, as did the point about Maître interpolating his own words. This is hardly as damning as Flint makes it: Maître was jazzing up the speech (adding laugh lines, transitions, and other dramatic devices) to play to the crowd after the longwinded main BU commencement. Placing a sinister construction on this, when Maître had handed out copies of the original and spoke from a photocopy in plain view of faculty, is typical of the* Globe. *The 1992* Almanac of American Politics *compares the* Globe*'s partisanship to Colonel McCormick's.*

If Flint's last claim is true, why did the biggest higher-ed story of 1991, Martin Luther King's plagiarized BU dissertation, get so little Globe *coverage?* —MC

Tyrannical Reactivism

John O'Sullivan's remarks on "*Obsessio Hortoniensis*" ["From the Editor," Dec. 16] were timely and unhappily true. At a dinner last week, my hostess, who in my previous acquaintance with her had always seemed an eminently rational and highly intelligent liberal (who, moreover, had often taken my side in arguments with other liberals), went simply out of her mind when I asserted the validity of the Willie Horton ad. Screaming over and over that I was "dangerous," "racist," and "fascist," she transfixed the company, and broke up the party, with a volcanic display of rage.

We can expect that in the years to come, as the liberal philosophy and social program are increasingly discredited on their merits, the charge of "racism" and "fascism" will become the Left's chief, and even sole, weapon.

Lawrence Auster
New York, N.Y.

Gender Bender

William Oddie ["The Goddess Squad," Nov. 18] seems to be missing the point that God is a spiritual being and, as such, doesn't need to copulate. Saying that God is exclusively masculine is as misleading as saying that God is exclusively feminine. A careful reading of the Bible shows that metaphoric imagery about God is as "feminine" as it is "masculine."

In discussing the Biblical account of Christ, it would be pointless to deny that the Word of God was manifest on earth in the body of a man. The divine manifestation *had* to be either male or female. The subsequent argument that the gender of God's self-revelation implies the supremacy of that gender over the other is unfounded. It also ignores the Gospel message about the nature of divine power as revealed in the crucifixion, which is not the sort of power that asserts itself through conflict. The Gospel emphasizes love, humility, grace, and a certain amount of humorous tolerance for oneself and one's fellows—the sort of thing that both sides of the "divine-gender argument" seem wholly to lack.

A definition of "Christian" is one who is like Christ in his or her behavior. This should not mean that women should become like men or, given a more "feminist" scenario, that men should become like women. What is Christ? Christ is the incarnation of the Word of God on Earth. In becoming more like Christ, Christians of *both* genders should attempt to become the living expression of God's Word, the good news of God's love.

If it is convenient for Mr. Oddie to refer to God as "Father," fine; after all, "Hey, you!" wouldn't be very useful, would it? Too much time is being wasted in pharisaical argument, and not enough in the imitation of Christ.

Mara Riley
Waldorf, Md.

Mara Riley says that I am "missing the point" that God, being a spiritual being, "doesn't need to copulate." It is Miss Riley who misses the point. She says that "a careful reading of the Bible shows that metaphoric imagery about God is as 'feminine' as it is 'masculine.'" There are two points here: first, as I note in my article, Jesus' use of the word "Father" for "God" is very clearly not just metaphorical. And "Father" is virtually the only word Jesus uses to talk to God or refer to Him: He is recorded in the Gospels as using it some 170 times. There is in the Gospels no comparable use of feminine language whatsoever.

Miss Riley says I may use the word "Father" for God "if it is convenient" for me, and that not enough time is being spent "in the imitation of Christ." I use the word "Father," as all Christians are bound to do, because Christ Himself commanded it, and not because it is "convenient." —WO

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FROM THE EDITOR

Church Notes

■ Civil wars seem to be developing on the Right: paleos *v.* neos, big-government conservatives *v.* small, etc.

It was ever thus. Diverse coalitions like the conservatives have differences as of nature. But they stay together partly because their continuing influence depends on it and partly because they agree more with their allies than with their opponents.

If conservatives now split into warring factions, that would suggest they had so little in common that they preferred to deliver the pure milk of doctrine to little bands of the faithful rather than haggle over an agenda that would be heard coast to coast.

Are conservatives really so divided? Here is a hastily compiled laundry-list of issues on which, I submit, 99 per cent of conservatives would agree: lower taxes, opposition to racial and sexual quotas, business deregulation, educational choice, measures against violent crime, an anti-dependency welfare policy, laws requiring parental consent to abortion, rejection of bilingualism and multiculturalism, and limited government.

Limited government? Yes. So-called big-government conservatives actually favor smaller government; it's just that they assume some government functions will continue indefinitely and want them to be conducted on conservative rather than liberal lines.

That seems good sense to me. But those who fear it may lead in practice to conservatives tolerating Leviathan—also reasonable, given the historical record—must still find BGCs preferable to liberals who support big government in principle. If so, it makes no sense to drive them out, swelling the Left coalition and making big government more likely.

The above list gives conservatives enough in common—and enough disagreements with the Left—to sustain an alliance indefinitely. Nor need we suppress differences of principle to do so. Conservatism is a broad church. All we need do is to conduct our debates in a good-humored and fraternal manner. Certainly NATIONAL REVIEW will air conservative differences in this ecumenical spirit.

We make no such pledge to non-conservatives (see pages 1 to 56).

■ Andy Ferguson has written only four "Gimlet Eye" columns since he started last September, but he has already built up quite a following for his brand of wry, curmudgeonly humor.

He is the first American sighting of a "young fogey"—the name given to High Anglican, Tory journalists on the London *Spectator*—even to the extent of belonging to a branch of the Episcopal Church that broke away in opposition to women priests.

To be a renegade Episcopalian is, of course, a wonderful stimulant for a journalist. There must be so many things in the modern world to make one's blood boil and one's copy flow. Not many people, after all, can quite sincerely denounce the Archbishop of Canterbury as a dangerous radical.

All this is by way of informing you that Andy relinquishes his column in this issue in order to join the White House as a presidential speechwriter. We wish him well. And if President Bush suddenly starts sounding like Soames Forsyte with a toothache, denouncing Madonna or the hula hoop, we'll know whom to credit.

■ Aram Bakshian, a speechwriter to three Republican Presidents, emerges from the other side of the revolving door to gimlet in this issue.

In William Safire's fine account of the Nixon Administration, *Before the Fall*, some speechwriters sit around watching John Connally deliver a defense of the President on television.

"Good speech," says one. "Who wrote it?" He is told: Aram Bakshian.

"And who did we get to play Connally?" Connally, it seems—so not ideal. But better than a speech written by Connally and delivered by Aram.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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FOR THE RECORD

■ Vice President **Dan Quayle** came in for usual media going-over when **George Bush** collapsed in Japan. But press's Pavlovian response ran athwart surprisingly positive treatment of Quayle in series of **David Broder/Bob Woodward** articles on the Veep in usually very critical *Washington Post*. The series by the *Post*'s ace political reporters was six months in the making. . . . With New Hampshire primary on the horizon, **John Cregan**, president of U.S. Business and Industrial Council, characterizes **Pat Buchanan** as a "trade hawk" rather than a protectionist. Difference: Cregan believes Buchanan favors hawkish stance in representing American interests internationally rather than enactment of high tariffs or trade barriers. . . . Bad news for Bush forces: **David Duke** will, after all, be on primary ballot in Massachusetts, thanks to ACLU. . . . Who will be advising the Democratic presidential contenders? *New York Times* says **Toby Moffett**, the liberalissimo former congressman from Connecticut, has—no surprise—signed on with Sen. **Tom Harkin**, the most liberal of the Dems. Harvard's **Robert Reich** has landed job in **Bill Clinton** camp. **Pat Caddell**, who masterminded **Jimmy Carter**'s 1976 electoral victory, has signed on as "unpaid" consultant to **Jerry Brown** campaign. And MIT's **Lester Thurow** is working for former Massachusetts Sen. **Paul Tsongas**. . . . Big Labor is playing coy this year on endorsing a presidential candidate after its premature endorsement of **Walter Mondale** in '84 and its ineffective endorsement of **Michael Dukakis** in '88. About the Mondale endorsement, Democratic political consultant **Ann Lewis** comments: "The larger labor looks, the more it's seen as a target." . . . **Geri D. Palast**, of the Service Union International, told *New York Times* that labor this year is hoping to endorse whatever Democrat has the best chance of winning the White House. By that logic, says a disheartened Sen. **Bob Kerrey**, the AFL-CIO "might just as well endorse George Bush."

■ In other races: Connecticut state representative and Gulf War veteran **Christopher Burnham** will challenge Sen. **Christopher Dodd**, who is way down in the polls. Burnham entered race after moderate GOP Rep. **Nancy Johnson** bowed out. . . . Maryland Republicans heartened that former **Jeane Kirkpatrick** aide **Alan Keyes**, a vocal and effective supporter of **Clarence Thomas** nomination, will oppose very liberal incumbent Sen. **Barbara Mikulski**.

■ *GQ*, the sleek lifestyle monthly, says the liberal media establishment in America "has gone the way of Pompeii" and been replaced by a new right-oriented establishment whose leading figures are **George Will** and **Robert Novak**. *GQ* calls *The New Republic* "an influential voice of the Right" (along with *NR*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Washington Times*). According to *GQ*, **Michael Kinsley** (*New Republic*) and **William Safire** (*New York Times*) are "the hot center" of today's opinion-making.

■ The Fair Play for Cuba Committee lives on, renamed Peace for Cuba. It will lead a pro-**Castro** demonstration at **Jacob Javits** Center in New York City on Jan. 25. Among the organizers from the world of entertainment: **Harry Belafonte**, **Kris Kristofferson**, **Martin Sheen**, **Ed Asner**, and **Margot Kidder**. . . . That international agreement engineered last October by all-time survival expert Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** of Cambodia appears on verge of collapse as UN peace-keeping force keeps postponing its arrival. . . . In Madrid, champion racing driver Prince **George Bagration**, pretender to the throne of (ex-Soviet) Georgia (the last monarch, **George XII**, was booted two hundred years ago) has been studying the Georgian language for a year. If called to the throne, he would reign as George XIV (skipping unlucky XIII). . . . **Kim Il Sung**'s North Korea has yet to toy with either democracy or free trade. All radios must be bought from the government and come tuned to just one station: Radio Pyongyang.

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"An ECU for your thoughts . . ."

■ The National Journalism Center in Washington, which offers training in media skills, is accepting applications for its spring internship session starting February 17. Application deadline is February 7. Contact **M. Stanton Evans**, **Chris Warden**, or **Mal Kline** at 800 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, 202-544-1333. . . . Application deadline for Claremont Institute June 29–August 7 political journalism course is February 29. Fellows receive $2,000 plus free lodging. For info, write Claremont Institute, 4650 Arrow Highway, Suite D6, Montclair, Calif. 91763; 714-621-6825. . . . The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) awarded first annual **Salvatori** Prize to **Russell Kirk**, for his lifetime of distinguished work in furtherance of America's founding principles. Those paying tribute to Kirk included former Attorney General **Edwin Meese III**, Heritage Foundation President and ISI Chairman **Edwin J. Feulner Jr.**, Ambassador **Holland H. Coors**, Amway founder **Richard M. Devos**, and former FTC Chairman **Daniel Oliver**.

■ Canadian conservative Prime Minister **Brian Mulroney**, whose approval figures are near vanishing point, got a knuckle-duster from British Columbian voters: As many of them think **Elvis Presley** lives as support Mulroney.

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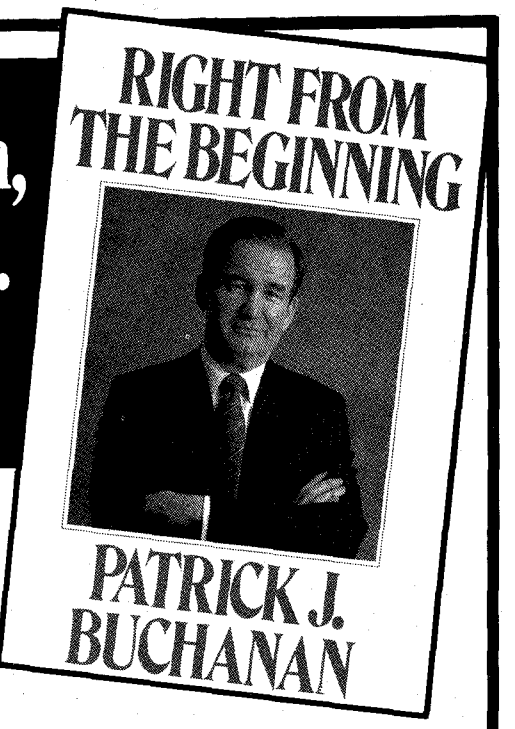

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THE WEEK

■ The good news is that Imelda Marcos is running for president. The bad news is that she's running in the Philippines.

■ While he was Transportation Secretary, Sam Skinner made no secret of his coveting John Sununu's job as Chief of Staff ("If the President asked me, why, of *course* I'd be delighted."). Well, after less than two months in the post it's beginning to look as if Skinner has confirmed the old saw about not wishing too hard for something or you might get it; Chief of Staff for a President slipping fast in the ratings is no picnic. In fairness, Skinner started out well, meeting with a range of groups across the conservative spectrum to hear their grievances, but it hasn't seemed to dawn on the old boy that this will help only if the President is seen to *act* on these grievances. According to one participant, Sam Skinner is "a very nice and well meaning man who hasn't the faintest notion why the Republicans have won the last three elections." The problem is that there's no one in the White House who can tell him.

■ Back from Japan, Lee Iacocca roared to the Detroit Economic Club: "I for one am fed up hearing from the Japanese, and I might say some Americans, too, that all our problems in this industry, all our problems, are our own damn fault. We do not have idiots running General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler, or our suppliers. And our workers are not lazy or stupid." Japanese protectionism may explain why Japanese cars outsell American cars in Japan. It doesn't explain why they outsell American cars in America. And as America's chief bailout beneficiary, Iacocca is in no position to complain about government favors. Besides, Detroit has priced itself out of its own market. The unions have jacked wages so far above their natural level that only a dwindling membership benefits as sticker prices have soared. Iacocca's real complaint is not with protectionism but with the free market he pretends to favor.

■ You're the State Department, and you want to set up a center to process passport applications. Where oh where will it go? Senator Warren Rudman likes Pease Air Force Base. Pease, Pease—isn't that in his state? New Something? Sounds like "lampshade," or "dumpster"? No, here it is, New *Hampshire*! Think of that—little New Hampshire, which borders on Canada, which almost never asks to see a passport, will get a passport application center—and four hundred jobs. Got a primary up there already, you hear. Those jobs could help, well, the incumbent. But you wouldn't know anything about that—you're the State Department, and your specialty is Krajina.

■ The December unemployment rate—7.1 per cent—is still well below the 10.7 per cent level recorded at the bottom of the last recession. The bad-news bears insist, however, that the unemployment rate is an increasingly irrelevant datum, since more and more discouraged job seekers are dropping out of the labor force altogether. Perhaps. But there is at least as much statistical evidence leading to the opposite conclusion—that the unemployment rate overstates the problem. For example, if you count as unemployed only those who were laid off or fired, omitting those who left jobs voluntarily or wish to re-enter the labor force, the unemployment rate plummets to 3.7 per cent. If, on the other hand, you count only people who have been out of work for 15 weeks or longer, the figure is 2.1 per cent. Part-time employment is on the increase, but this is not necessarily a sign of weakness: BLS statistics indicate that more than three-fourths of those who work part-time do so voluntarily. There are also, of course, millions of people working off the books—gainfully employed in an underground economy that grows larger whenever regulations and tax policy makes legitimate business a losing proposition.

■ The Philip Morris Company has put out an attractive booklet, *The Bill of Rights: A Guide to American Liberties*. In celebration of the two-hundredth anniversary of that document, the makers of Marlboro and Pall Mall present "two hundred facts" about the

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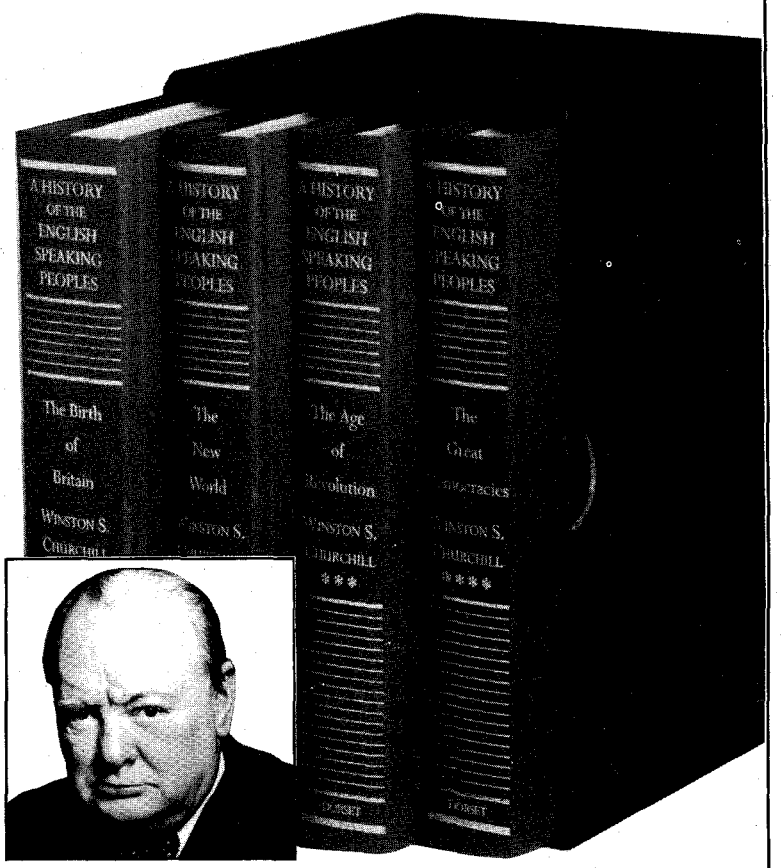
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Constitution. These include the fact that the ACLU is the "nation's oldest organization dedicated to protecting the Bill of Rights for all Americans, no matter what their political or social views might be"; the fact that Governor Dukakis's veto of a law requiring public-school teachers to administer the Pledge of Allegiance shows that "there is a role for the states in supporting the Bill of Rights"; and the fact that the Warren Court included "some of the most passionate defenders of individual rights in the Court's history . . . Black, Douglas, Brennan, Goldberg, Marshall, and Fortas." Similar "facts" are dispensed on the death penalty, the exclusionary rule, the "right to privacy," federalism, and pornography. We had been undecided, but the more we scour the emanations and penumbras of the Bill of Rights, the more persuaded we become that there is a constitutional right to be free of second-hand smoke.

■ The National Organization for Women is 25 years old. That's very, very nice. The *New York Times*, which thinks it's nice too, wrote a story about the birthday, which noted that membership was up to 250,000. Along about paragraph twenty, the *Times* mentioned Concerned Women for America, which it identified as one of NOW's "conservative opponents," but it didn't mention that CWA has 565,000 members, which wasn't very nice. Maybe the *Times* will pay them more attention when CWA turns 25, or hits the million mark, whichever comes last.

■ There is some dispute whether a female visitor gave former D.C. Mayor Marion Barry "a brief peck on the cheek" (his story) or oral sex right there in the prison waiting room in front of witnesses, but the lady has been barred from further visits, and Mr. Barry has been moved to another prison, just in case he keeps trying to act like a public official.

■ Russia and Ukraine remain at loggerheads over vital issues, threatening the cohesion of the new democratic Commonwealth. In economic policy, they had earlier agreed (or so it seemed) to keep a unified currency and to keep their trade open. Now the Ukrainians, fearing the fallout from Yeltsin's January 2 price reform, are proceeding with plans to issue their own currency and clamping down to prevent their scarce goods from pouring into Russia's higher-priced market. In the military field, nuclear forces were to remain under collective control, while conventional forces were to be divided up. A major brawl then erupted over the control of the nuclear-armed (and even non-nuclear-armed) ships of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet. Needless to say, the collapse of Russian–Ukrainian cooperation would have serious consequences: exacerbation of both countries' economic travails, possible outright military conflict, the unleashing of forces that could undermine the present democratic base in both countries and that are less well disposed to the West. But we cannot be in favor of Russian hegemony, and should not be in the business of badgering the other countries into submission to Russia. We must hope that a realistic basis for Russian–Ukrainian cooperation will be found. The tentative compromise to divide up the Black Sea Fleet is an encouraging sign.

■ According to a recent report in the center-left Athens weekly *To Vima*, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) wants to attain custody of V. I. Lenin's mummified corpse and place it on display at party headquarters for pay-per-view veneration. After extensive feasibility studies and market research, the KKE leadership reckons there are still some 1.2 billion obedient Communists around the globe who would make annual pilgrimages to the new shrine. Just in case ticket receipts fail to meet expectations, the KKE reportedly plans to route the faithful through an adjacent store with books and hammer-and-sickle memorabilia. We'd suggest adding a souvlaki stand—and how about serving complimentary shots of Stoli?

■ There was a time, not so long ago, when paranoia was assumed to be a monopoly of the Right. Richard Hofstadter even wrote a book, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, which, after warming up on Populist money cranks like "Coin Harvey," finished with the John Birch Society and the supporters of Barry Goldwater, whom Hofstadter equated. There haven't been a lot of scholars revisiting "the paranoid style" recently, perhaps because it's moved left. In the last decade, we've had *Silkwood* (the evils of the nuclear-power industry), the October Surprise (the evils of the Reagan campaign), and now Oliver Stone's *JFK* (round up the usual suspects). Hofstadter's general diagnosis was that paranoid fantasies arise among people who perceive a loss of status or power. After Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, 1989, and 1991, that certainly describes the Left. Stone should take off his bullet-proof vest, though: George Bush is doing his best to undo all of those developments.

■ Republican Big-Tentswoman Ann Stone usually argues for a change in the party's opposition to abortion in pragmatic terms. Recently we got a glimpse of Mrs. Stone's philosophical grasp of the subject. Yes, Mrs. Stone told Peter LaBarbera of *Human Events*, technology now allows us to see the intricate human form in the womb very early on, and these images have a certain "emotional appeal." But then, "What about natural rock formations that look like people? . . . Just because something is formed in that shape does not necessarily mean that that's what it is . . . and that it's there yet." Hmmm. Now there's a cold, dispassionate analysis. And in-

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deed it *does* lead us to wonder whether this Stone is human.

■ The city of Berkeley—yes, *that* Berkeley—has renamed Columbus Day "Indigenous Peoples Day." So far there are no plans to return the choice real estate the city sits on to its original inhabitants. And come to think of it, isn't the place named after Bishop Berkeley, the notorious white male philosopher who held that indigenous peoples didn't really exist until *we* perceived them?

Thirty Seconds over Tokyo

FOR THE LAST twenty years, the structure of international relations in the Far East and the Pacific has represented a historic American achievement. For the first time in modern history, all the region's major powers—the United States, Japan, and China—have had harmonious relations with one another, overcoming past enmities, keeping the Russian bear at bay, providing a structure of stability and security that was the precondition for the surge of prosperity that the Pacific region has enjoyed. (That structure also mitigated the damage from our Indochina fiasco.)

Today, this happy set of circumstances is under enormous strain, with U.S.–China relations soured, China weakened internally, Japan growing in power, the United States under domestic pressure to reduce its military role overseas, and, last but not least, mounting bitterness over trade in the U.S.–Japan relationship.

To try to salvage this situation was one of the main purposes of President Bush's Far Eastern trip. At least, it was one of the *original* purposes of the trip, before the Administration panicked at the unemployment figures and began pandering to the Japan-bashing crowd. To the President's credit, the message he conveyed on most of his itinerary—the unreported part—was exactly the right one: that America intended to remain an Asian power and to continue to play the pivotal role in Asian security. Our departure would be the most destabilizing event imaginable. It would leave a vacuum, to be filled by whom? The Japanese? Not surprisingly, just as in Europe, *no one* wants us to leave, since all parties trust the United States as benign, and trust their neighbors far less.

In Singapore, President Bush was able to announce new porting, training, and maintenance arrangements with that country, replacing in part the facilities abandoned in the now-benighted Philippines. The streamlining of our forces in Korea has been put on hold, because of the still-serious North Korean threat. All this was good policy.

It is in this context that our relationship with Japan must be judged. As Japan has grown stronger, the tight political link with the United States has divorced Japan's economic power from harmful security implications. The Japanese have built up their military—at our urging—and are footing the bill for our forces in Japan. But there is a limit beyond which we should not—and cannot, without unnerving the entire region—turn over our unique security responsibilities to the Japanese. The paradox is that the stronger Japan grows as an economic power, the more essential our political and security partnership becomes *for us*. Hence our bilateral economic brawls should not be permitted to tear the fabric of a political connection that is a long-term imperative.

Meanwhile, if the President went to Japan in search of jobs, he should have known to leave Lee Iacocca and his establishment CEO cronies behind. Employment at large American corporations—not just automakers, but the entire Fortune 500 group—has been on the skids since the early Eighties, long before the current recession. Those twenty million jobs created during Ronald Reagan's tenure were largely the work of small businesses, run by younger entrepreneurs. For them, government protectionism meant the cop on the beat.

Does higher employment depend on lower trade deficits? Does Detroit's inability to crack the Japanese market reflect Japanese trade restraints? Recent history thoroughly debunks both of these assertions. The Eighties, for example, saw record employment co-exist with record trade deficits; the recession, on the other hand, has seen a significant fall in the trade deficit even as unemployment rises. Thanks to a cheaper dollar, low interest rates, and wage increases smaller than those of most other nations, the U.S. is now one of the most competitive producers in the industrialized world. And the Japanese are among our best customers, buying record amounts of U.S. aircraft, specialty chemicals, computer software, and engineering services.

Detroit's obsession with Japanese trade restraints says more about the Big Three's strategy for survival than about Japanese trade practices. Since 1981 Detroit has vowed that, given just a few more years of "voluntary" import quotas, it would beat the Japanese on cost and quality. A decade and many millions of executive compensation dollars later, U.S. automakers still deliver products perceived as inferior, more costly, and containing fewer of the features offered as standard equipment on foreign cars. The auto execs moaned over the relatively small number of American cars Japan agreed to buy, but they have yet to put the steering wheel on the proper side for Japanese drivers.

The Japanese are not blameless, however. Their old-boy network of corporate executives and govern-

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ment bureaucrats tinkers heavily with trade. But the impact on net trade flows is minuscule. Our trade deficit is overwhelmingly made in the U.S.A., the result of our saving too little relative to our investment needs. We are a nation of spenders; our meager savings are snapped up by the government. The Japanese save four times as much as we do, and their money goes right into business investment and productivity-enhancing R&D—not only in Japan, but in the U.S. also.

Meanwhile, the artificial shortage of foreign autos here adds about $2,500 to auto prices—domestic and import alike. Between 1980 and 1989 the cost of a new car rose from 18.7 weeks of the median household's earnings to 24.7 weeks. According to the Institute for International Economics, trade barriers of all sorts cost Americans $80 billion per year, or more than $1,200 per family. More importantly, these costs are ten times higher than the benefits accruing to producers.

RIGHT DATA

Reaganomics Revisited

THE LONGEST peacetime economic expansion in U.S. history took place between November 1982 and July 1990. During those 92 months—a period three times longer than the average economic recovery since 1919—real GNP rose 32 per cent, or 4.2 per cent per year. There were 19.3 million more Americans working at the end of the cycle than in 1982, and median family income, which had declined from $34,156 (1990 dollars) in 1978 to $32,037 in 1982, hit a record $36,062 in 1990. The poverty population, which grew by 7 million during the Carter years, shrank by 4 million during the Reagan boom.

It has become fashionable, however, to denigrate the Reagan achievement, often via the use of selective or misleading statistics. A case in point: the recent nine-part series in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, entitled "America: What Went Wrong?" Authors Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele of the *Inquirer* staff cite tax-return data to demonstrate the (alleged) enormous disparity between rich and middle-class income growth during the Reagan years: "Between 1980 and 1989 the combined salaries of people in the $20,000–$50,000 income group increased 44 per cent," but "During the same period, the combined salaries of people earning $1 million or more a year increased 2,184 per cent."

They never say whether these are real (inflation-adjusted) or nominal growth rates, or whether they reflect growth in the aggregate income or in the per-capita income of each bracket—a crucial point in determining whether the rich really got richer, or whether there were simply more of them.

More importantly, because the tax laws change so frequently, IRS statistics are virtually useless for measuring the true distribution of income. The 1986 tax-reform act, for example, disallowed passive real-estate tax shelters, forcing many high-income individuals to include previously sheltered income in their adjusted gross income (AGI). Barlett and Steele interpret the resulting rise in AGI as evidence of "the rich getting richer," when it really signals that the rich are being taxed on a larger fraction of their true income.

At the other extreme, the 1986 law removed millions of the working poor from the tax rolls. The resulting decline in the AGI of poor taxpayers is interpreted by Barlett and Steele as a decline in their economic fortunes rather than a progressive tilt to the tax code.

Of course, the rich *did* get richer during the Eighties, but not without making others richer also. Department of Commerce statistics show the average real income of the wealthiest 20 per cent of American households increased 22 per cent between 1980 and 1989, while that of the middle three quintiles rose by a range of 8 to 19 per cent. Unlike IRS statistics, these data are consistent over time and include transfer payments.

Perhaps the most blatant distortion involves allegations of a pro-rich bias in the 1986 tax law. The authors note—correctly—that the number of wealthy taxpayers paying the alternative minimum tax (AMT), which was designed to ensure that nobody escapes paying at least some tax, fell by 75 per cent between 1986 and 1989, and that the average AMT payment fell by 90 per cent. But this trend actually reflects a more progressive income tax, not the "illusory" tax hike on the rich claimed by the authors.

In fact, AMT payments rise or fall with the number of loopholes or "tax preferences" available to wealthy taxpayers. (The minimum tax is levied on the amounts of such exemptions.) The 1986 tax reform eliminated many loopholes available to wealthy taxpayers—e.g., the passive real-estate tax shelters mentioned above. Thus while AMT payments fell after 1986, the total amount of income taxes collected from individuals earning $100,000 and above rose by more than $50 billion between 1986 and 1989, and their share of all income-tax payments went from 29.0 per cent to 35.9 per cent.

—Ed Rubenstein

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Ultimately, protectionism is a scheme to redistribute income from those who lack political power to those who have it. The big question is how large a burden Washington is willing to impose on American consumers to keep Ford, Chrysler, and GM alive.

The Vice Squad

IT'S OFFICIAL: Dan Quayle is a serious, competitive political leader grievously underestimated by the press. He didn't cheat to get into law school, nor when he arrived. He did not use his wealth and influence to get into the National Guard. In fact, the Quayle millions are myth as well.

Washington now knows all these things because of a curious, seven-part series in the *Washington Post* by Bob Woodward and David Broder. Of course, the reason so many had hitherto believed all these nasty things about Dan Quayle is largely that the *Post* helped promulgate them, a fact nowhere conceded in this series; indeed, while the authors are quick to apportion blame to specific political figures, when it comes to the sins of the Fourth Estate they retreat into the passive voice ("More damaging than reports of a poor academic record . . . were published allegations of plagiarism"). Reading between the lines, the *Washington Times*'s Don Kowet perceptively tagged the Broder/Woodward profile as "the longest albeit cleverly disguised 'correction' ever run by a newspaper."

True, they rehash all the Veep's gaffes and attempt to draw Marilyn Quayle as a shrew, but the former is old hat and the latter is refuted by the absolute soundness of her judgments. Certainly Mrs. Quayle comes off as more savvy than James Baker, whom she fingers as the man whose mismanagement was responsible for her husband's difficulties in 1988; Baker again confesses to strange memory lapses (*à la* his instructions to Ambassador April Glaspie in Iraq before the war). Even the sometimes hostile comments regarding Quayle's Council on Competitiveness, the one market-oriented brake on the rule-through-regulation crowd, testifies to its efficacy. No doubt this is also why seven Democratic committee and subcommittee chairman have targeted the Council for "investigation."

Whatever Dan Quayle's merits vis-à-vis other conservative leaders, he is a lot smarter than most of the people calling him dumb, and this has been amply documented in any number of publications, NATIONAL REVIEW included. But none of this seems to count until it has the Beltway seal of approval, which helps explain why the Broder/Woodward opus was delivered with all the solemnity of Moses coming down from the mountain. In what other business can you wait four years to issue a correction and then be covered in glory for saying you had been wrong all along? The *Post* series on the Vice President reveals much more about the state of the American news business than about Dan Quayle.

And Then There Were Five

As Darwinian constraints
  Hammer Tsongas down,
Clinton seems to ratchet up,
  While a worried frown
Furrows Kerrey's forehead, as
  Harkin kicks the snow,
Leaving Brown to carry on
  Where the moonbeams go.

W. H. VON DREELE

Desert Storm—Reprise

THE ANNIVERSARY of Desert Storm was the occasion for journalistic reassessments, of varying degrees of accuracy. Many liberals seemed to be gearing up to attack Desert Storm, in order to justify (or distract attention from) their abysmal wrongheadedness at the time. History will be the final judge, but a few observations are in order now.

For one thing, the revelations of the extent of Iraq's nuclear program retrospectively shatter the argument made a year ago that reliance on economic sanctions was a viable alternative to war. Even *after* Desert Storm, the world community cannot be certain it has stopped Saddam's nuclear program; without the destruction wrought by coalition forces, his ability to evade sanctions would have meant successful completion of his nuclear project, perhaps by now. The Arab coalition against him would then have crumbled under intimidation; and whether the United States and its allies would have been ready to take on a nuclear Iraq is an interesting question. That George Bush spared the world this nightmare should earn him its profound gratitude.

But the strategic achievement was important beyond this. We now have radical Iraq reduced as a factor in the region, the moderate Arabs emboldened to make new moves toward peace with Israel, Iraq's attempted stranglehold over OPEC oil pricing broken, American influence in the Middle East enhanced. No small gains.

Against this must be weighed the disappointments. Among them are the repressive behavior of the Kuwaiti regime toward its people after it was returned to power (and our seeming lack of interest in

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influencing it); the continuing reluctance of our Gulf Arab friends to accept a more visible American military presence; and—most important of all—the very continuation in power of Saddam Hussein. As long as he survives, he casts a shadow over the strategic achievements listed above. While not a major political factor in the region today, he is canny and resourceful enough to bide his time and bid for a regional role later. (Yasir Arafat recently paid him a visit.) President Bush had two opportunities to bring him down—once by pursuing the destruction of the Republican Guard to a conclusion before hostilities ended, and later by aiding the Kurdish and Shiite rebellions that erupted afterward. Saddam was on the ropes at home, and our persistence on either occasion might well have toppled him. In his place would be a more mediocre and less threatening military leadership (if not a democratic one) and a weaker and more fragmented Iraq. The region today would be more secure if this had happened.

Over all, we continue to applaud the President's performance in Desert Storm. The passage of time has made irrefutably clear how right he was. We remember how intense was the public and congressional debate in this country—which is to say, what political courage his decision took. Like Waterloo, it was a close-run thing—not the course of the battle, but the willingness to fight it. And for that, despite all the criticism leveled at George Bush elsewhere in this issue, we can thank God that he and not Michael Dukakis was our President.

Defense Free Fall

THE "base force"—the Defense Department's reaction to the end of the cold war—was a fairly unimaginative reduction of our armed forces by roughly 25 per cent across the board. It spread the bureaucratic pain around the services, and made no excruciating demands on the Pentagon officials charged with conceiving such cuts. Two years ago ("The Week," Dec. 31, 1989) we warned that this was the approach the Administration was likeliest to take, and that it would not suffice. Unfortunately, we were right. The base force is going by the boards, and the Defense Department budget looks to be in free fall, as the Administration scurries to find money for election-year tax cuts.

The absence of any visible strategic rationale to shape the corresponding cuts in the armed forces is disheartening, as is the unwillingness of people in the Administration who know better to speak up on the subject. Will any military leader or political appointee resign in protest if he feels unacceptable damage is being done to the national defense? We doubt it, and that is a sad comment on those who bear the responsibility for what will now unfold.

The Bush Administration has not, in the two years since the collapse of the Soviet empire became unmistakable, built a consensus for a substantial defense establishment. It has not attempted to create certain commonly accepted guidelines—that we should spend, say, 3 per cent of GDP per annum on this, our national insurance policy—nor has it attempted to create a bipartisan coalition for sound armed forces. The Administration has not, we fear, come to terms with the possibility that our future defense needs will be not only smaller but different. One vague presidential speech on the subject, given on the day Saddam invaded Kuwait and soon forgotten, is all we have heard on the subject.

There are some hopeful signs, to be sure. The Air Force has begun a substantial reorganization to reflect the obsolescence of the division between "tactical" and "strategic" aircraft. The Marine Corps has turned to promising new technologies—from netted computers to remotely piloted vehicles—with a will. But fundamental change must come from the Commander-in-Chief and his Secretary of Defense, and as yet there is no sign of a revolution from the top aimed at forcing the armed services to rethink, in the most thorough possible way, what they are and how they should operate. There has been no civilian-supervised review of missions, no systematic thought about the overhaul of the military education system, no readiness—publicly, at any rate—to recast the armed services to operate with much less in the way of overseas basing than ever before.

Yet even were such changes made, it would be impossible to make them work without the assurance of some floor for defense spending. The base force probably attempted to retain too much of the old cold-war force structure. But there are limits. Without some stable prediction of future expenditure, serious planning for an effective military force smaller than that envisioned until now will be impossible. And without rather more political courage and statesmanship than the Administration has shown thus far, the national defense will continue to slide.

To Tokyo and Back

Though Mosbacher wheedled
As Brady piled on,
While auto executives
Practiced their con,
The President parted
With little to show,
And now he's competing
With Pat in the snow.

W. H. VON DREELE

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Boobs versus Breasts

A WOMAN'S RIGHT to control her own body has finally encountered a limit: the FDA has temporarily banned silicone breast implants, on the grounds that they sometimes leak or get inflamed or interfere with mammograms. No one has demonstrated that the risks of damage are great, or that the injuries that do result are severe, and the ban will undoubtedly be lifted if such injuries cannot be decisively established. What is significant, however, is the approval that this ban has met in the salons of the politically correct. "Those women who locate their self-esteem in their bra," sniffs Laura Shapiro in *Newsweek*, "are accurately reading their culture. Sad to say, they're also surrendering to their culture." Surrendering to it? Maybe they're just at home in it. And maybe that's their own business.

We await the feminist discovery of a culture in which women—or men, for that matter—don't care how they look. A normal concern with looks is something more deeply rooted than mere vanity. There is plainly an inborn human desire in all of us to present our best face to the world. Hence, the belief that one's appearance is marred by some single distorting feature can itself be a source of obsessive and life-distorting misery. This can be especially true for those women who have undergone the devastation of breast cancer and mastectomy—a major market for breast implants.

The FDA has now decided, on very slender grounds, that the prospect of a more satisfactory appearance is not worth—in fact, is *never* worth—a slight risk of discomfort or inconvenience later. This is a reasonable decision for any woman to make for herself. But the FDA has made it for all women. Once again the government has given the prigs undue leverage over the lives of ordinary people.

Some More Equal

SCOTT MCCONNELL, writing in the *New York Post*, recently gave capsule accounts of half a dozen crimes committed by blacks against whites in New York within a ten-day period. They involved stabbing, mugging, beating, shooting. In one, a Russian immigrant was shot dead by muggers while trying to protect his wife. Near Columbia University, a gang of nine blacks aged 10 to 15 went on a rampage. One woman was beaten, another victim required stitches. In Brooklyn, a 19-year-old Panamanian immigrant was gunned down and killed by black robbers who seized a coat he had received for Christmas. Nothing much has been heard about these crimes.

Now look at the other side of the coin. Earlier this month, four white teenagers squirted what appears to have been white shoe polish on the faces of two black youngsters, aged 14 and 12. A degrading humiliation had been imposed upon these children, but no serious violence or injury had been done to them. Nonetheless, Mayor Dinkins termed it a "heinous crime." The media went ballistic. Appeals went out for "tolerance."

Why the discrepancy? Because unlike the shootings, knifings, wildings, and other mayhem, this was a *white* crime. In Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*, the Bronx D.A., politically ambitious, longs amid a sea of black crime and violence for The Great White Defendant, and along he comes, like Moby Dick, in the form of the feckless Sherman McCoy.

What we have before us is the phenomenon of so-called "bias crimes," née "hate crimes," which is to say crimes committed against members of designated victim groups. Any crime which the evidence suggests was motivated by "bias"—against a black, say, or a homosexual—attracts more public condemnation and police resources than the same crime committed against other citizens. In extreme cases, simple assault accompanied by the relevant slurs is taken more seriously than murder.

The logic behind the select categories no doubt consists of the assumption that certain groups need special protection, e.g., blacks. But crimes committed against blacks are overwhelmingly committed by blacks. These, presumably, are not motivated by race and so do not get jacked up into a special category, no matter how serious such crimes are.

This double standard is highly dangerous, whatever its short-term rhetorical convenience. It is resented by victims of serious crimes who do not receive special treatment. It directs attention away from some of the most serious offenses—namely, muggings and murders for gain. And it enables the liberal establishment to avoid a serious crackdown on lawlessness, while simultaneously assuring client groups that their safety will be provided for. Affirmative action in employment is merely an injustice; affirmative action is law enforcement making the courts and police accessories both before and after the fact.

It Feels So Good

Mr. Gephardt, like Hawley and Smoot,
Has a chronic desire to shoot
    Both his feet with a plan
    To bar cars from Japan
As the crazies in Congress salute.

W. H. VON DREELE

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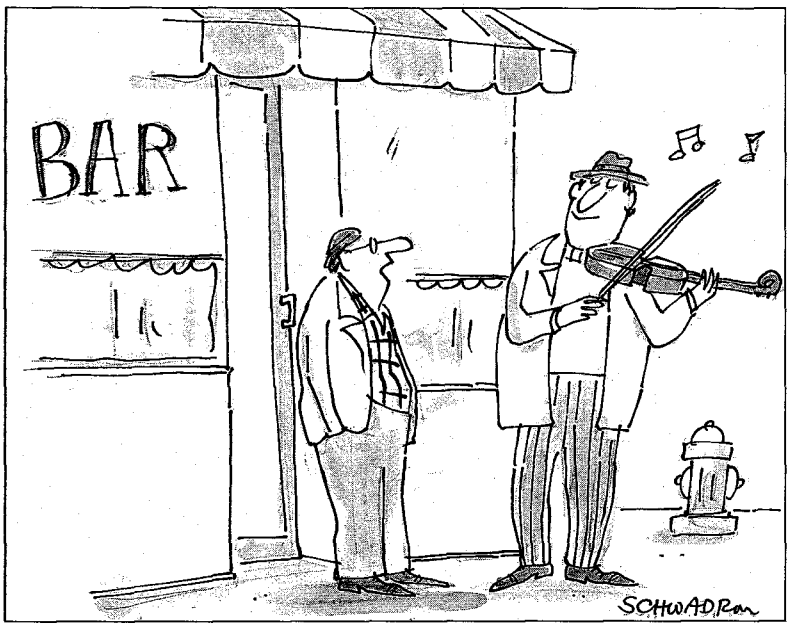

"Frankly, I'm relieved that this is all you meant when you said, 'Let's go outside and settle a score.'"

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Memo to: Our Readers
From: WFB

Many subscribers have written in to comment on the December 30 issue ("In Search of Anti-Semitism"), and there has been published commentary by columnists and editorial writers. The February issue of *Commentary* magazine leads with six pages by Editor Norman Podhoretz devoted to an examination of the issue. *NR* has invited the principal figures in the essay to send in publishable commentary. Mr. Pat Buchanan pleads the press of his campaign in New Hampshire to delay his own analysis. For that reason primarily we will hold off what one might call Chapter II of the inquiry into anti-Semitism until the issue dated March 16, which will appear soon after the New Hampshire primaries, gving the principals, and others, time to collect their thoughts.

■ Wm—

I think your comments on women flying combat aircraft in actual combat are slightly off the mark. My heroic stepson, now flying FA-18 Hornets off the *Forrestal* in the eastern Mediterranean (a combat-qualified flight leader now), has told me that combat maneuvers routinely put the pilot through very high G forces, on the order of eight or nine. The gulp-and-shout system of breathing (to block the seepage of blood from the head) requires powerful musculature in the chest. The head, with helmet and associated gear, under nine Gs, has an effective weight of something like a hundred pounds. Simply to keep one's head up enough to be able to see forward requires the kind of bull neck you find on football linemen. Combat maneuvers put a premium on upper body strength, which is not God's gift to the ladies.

We've known for seventy years that women are wonderful pilots when the job is transport flying, acrobatics, instructing, crop dusting, and so on. Put them in combat in today's hot jets, though, and a man will blow them out of the sky every time.

A second point on physical ability: nobody wants to talk about it, but the truth is that many women go unpredictably wacky during menstruation. Forgetfulness, inattentiveness, and just plain confusion seem to be very common problems. That's another reason why they don't belong in combat cockpits, and men have been chosen to protect them.

Aff.,
Wm
[Wm. F. Rickenbacker]

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Not quite all subscribers to NATIONAL REVIEW are highly educated or necessarily well-informed.

In my case, at over sixty years old, I find that I don't know all that much about anything, including Latin. Does the phrase "reductio ad absurdum" mean "cut the bull----"?

Densely,
Raymond A. Woodson
Lakeland, Fla.

Dear Mr. Woodson: Well . . . it leads to that. For instance, when the president of the ABA, rebuking Vice President Quayle for suggesting there were too many lawsuits, responded by saying, "What would we do if there were no lawyers?" he was answering the question by reducing it to an absurd point. Cordially,
WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Browsing in a bookshop recently, I came across a first edition of *God and Man at Yale*. Its price was $70. I thought you might want to know your current market value. Based on a $2 original price, you have compounded at an annual rate of 14.65 per cent, much better than a savings account, U.S. Government bonds, and even most stocks.

Sincerely,
David B. Pittaway
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Pittaway: Well, that's good news, and thanks. But I was hoping you'd say that the value of my book had risen *pro tanto* with the cost of tuition at Yale! Cordially,
—WFB

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ON THE SCENE

Salinas at Midterm

ROBERT S. STROTHER

CUERNAVACA

THREE YEARS ago Carlos Salinas de Gortari was being denounced as a usurper whose claim to the Mexican presidency was based on a blatant election fraud perpetrated by his Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). That is forgotten now. At the halfway point in his six-year term he has turned a sick economy around, suppressed inflation, and reversed the principal socialist errors of his predecessors in office, making himself, in the process, the most popular Mexican president in many years.

Salinas's popularity is not based on charisma. He is short and bald, and has not smiled in public since receiving his post-graduate degree from Harvard two decades ago. But he is courageous, willing to grapple with the politically untouchable. A few weeks after taking office he took on a group of labor-union leaders who had been milking Petroleos Mexicanos (Pemex), the government's petroleum monopoly, for millions of dollars, large chunks of which they wasted spectacularly at gambling tables in Las Vegas.

Government and party officials pointed out that several presidents had considered but abandoned the idea of bringing the Pemex gang to heel. It could shut down Pemex operations overnight and cut off the government's income from huge oil sales abroad. It also could swing the votes of 110,000 Pemex workers against the PRI in future elections.

Salinas ignored the advice. Troops grabbed the chieftains within hours of receiving the order and all are now serving long terms in prison. There were no strikes, no disturbances; fast action made the threats hollow.

During the next three years Salinas knocked over a herd of sacred cows. Among them was the stevedores' union in Veracruz. It had elevated featherbedding and goldbricking to unheard of heights. Union members drew fat wages but did no work whatever themselves. Instead they hired casual peons to do the stevedoring at meager wages, and pocketed the difference. Veracruz, which had been Mexico's leading port for four hundred years, had become the slowest and most expensive. Shipowners avoided the port when possible, and the city fell into the doldrums.

Tim Bower

At Salinas's orders the federal government canceled the stevedores' contracts and staffed the docks with men eager to work. Turnaround time for ships became as fast as at any other port on the Gulf Coast.

Salinas recently challenged one of the most potent of Mexican taboos, the *ejido* system of farming. It is considered by many to be a sacred heritage of the Mexican revolution and, as such, untouchable. Others see it as a failed system which forces Mexico—once self-sufficient in food—to spend $4 billion a year on food imports.

The 28,000 *ejidos* occupy about half Mexico's arable land. They are communal farms, like the *kolkhozes* in Russia. The government owns the land and assigns plots to individual *ejidatarios*. The plots are too small for mechanized farming, and the 2.7 million *ejidatarios* live in grinding poverty. Many illegally rent their plots to neighbors and move to a city or head for the U.S. and jobs as migrant farm workers.

Salinas asked the Congress to amend the constitution so as to phase out the *ejido* system. However, a large number of Mexicans, including the *caciques* (rural political bosses), have a vested interest in keeping the *ejidos* just as they are. Salinas will have to battle for this one.

Traditionally the Mexican government has dealt with the United States at a very long arm's length. Salinas discarded that custom, making friends with President George Bush, who helped him and his finance team win a reduction in Mexico's multibillion-dollar debt to American banks. The friendship of the two presidents was also an important factor in reaching preliminary accord to the Trilateral Free Trade Agreement.

A decade ago, when President José López Portillo "nationalized" the entire Mexican banking system, there was wild rejoicing. Few have dared since to suggest that it be reversed. But when Salinas proposed just that, Congress approved, and within weeks the first of the banks was sold to private individuals, at a multimillion-dollar profit for the government.

Inflation in Mexico raged as high as 159 per cent a year at one point in the 1980s and was still high when Salinas was sworn in in 1988. He and his finance team attacked it with an agreement between the government on the one hand and labor and management on the other, pledging strict control of prices and wages.

El Pacto, as it is called, has worked reasonably well. Inflation is currently under 20 per cent and falling. Labor leaders complain that workers are bearing an unfair share of the load but agreed, nevertheless, to go along with the most recent six-month extension of *El Pacto*.

Even the moderate success in curbing inflation so far has had a number of good side effects. Interest rates have

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fallen to the lowest level in ten years; at least $3 billion of the Mexican capital that fled the country in the early Eighties has returned; and the Mexican stock market is one of the most active in the world. However, many economists, foreign and domestic, point out that inflation has been suppressed but not cured, and could erupt again as it did in both Argentina and Brazil after brief initial successes. Unemployment is dangerously high, and crime is flourishing as rarely before, with kidnappings for ransom, murders, highway robberies, and burglaries common occurrences all over the country.

Fighting the general breakdown is Salinas's pet project, the Program for National Solidarity. It is a self-help program to bring needed amenities to forlorn little communities all over the republic. The community chooses a project, such as a health clinic, a school, a potable-water system, or street lighting. The government then supplies the laborers, who are paid standard wages from the central fund. In three years, more than 150,000 communities have been helped. Almost every week, Salinas leaves Los Pinos, the Mexican White House, to inaugurate projects in a half-dozen villages, and almost every week his popularity grows.

But none of Salinas's economic or social initiatives has been as surprising as his attack on the PRI's oligarchy. For more than sixty years the PRI never accepted the loss of an important election, federal, state, or local. But two years ago Ernesto Ruffo of the National Action Party (PAN) won the governorship of Baja, California. Local PRI officials were prepared to resist the surrender of power, but Salinas sent Ruffo congratulations on his victory, and PAN took over its first state governorship.

Last summer Salinas went further. Before the federal election he and the party's central executive committee ordered all concerned to run clean elections. Polls had predicted easy victories for the PRI in most of the states, largely because of the popularity of Salinas's reforms, but Salinas was anxious to avoid protest, lest it might fatally damage chances that the U.S. Congress would ratify the North American Free Trade Agreement.

That led to a bizarre incident. There were the usual cries of "Fraud!" in several states, with objections particularly loud in Guanajuato and San Luis Potosi. Opposition parties, claiming to have won the governorships in those states, organized non-stop protest demonstrations. After the two PRI candidates had been officially certified as winners and indeed sworn in, Salinas took the unprecedented step of ordering both to relinquish their offices. Both complied reluctantly, but local PRI officials were furious; they predicted a host of fraud charges in gubernatorial elections this year.

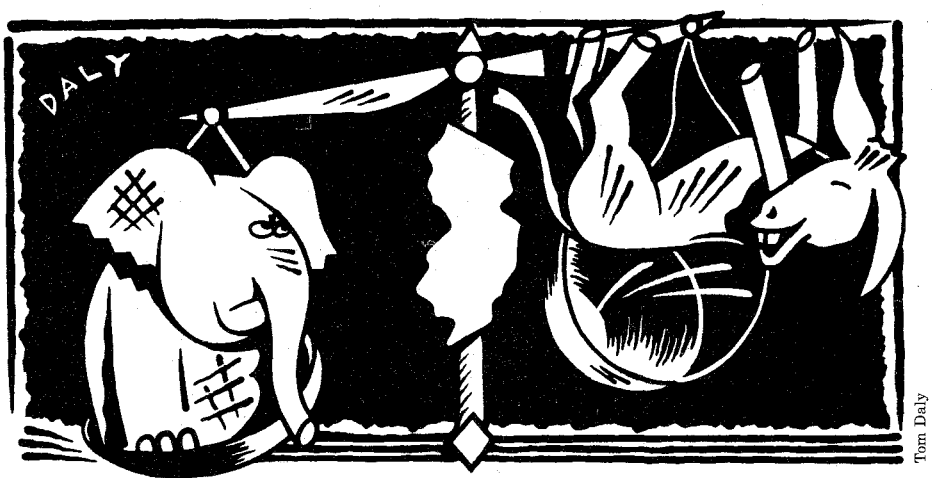
There undoubtedly were many instances of fraud in the 1991 voting but there also was undoubtedly a PRI landslide. The PRI, in fact, received more than twice as many legitimate votes as all nine of the opposition parties together.

Some analysts attribute the poor showing of the opposition parties to the lack of genuine platforms. The losers ignored such powerful issues as the government's fierce tax-collection methods, which are widely denounced as "tax terrorism," and its failure to reduce the size of the bureaucracy. They made no demands for an end to police lawlessness, or for programs to give jobs to the many jobless.

Salinas's promise of an open and more democratic election system is still only a promise. His economic reforms have won him approval abroad as well as at home, but at the halfway point his job is only half done. □

Tax, Spend, De-Elect

GEOFFREY MORRIS



Tom Daly

TRENTON

WHEN newly elected Governor Jim Florio first called a meeting with the New Jersey legislature in 1989, he didn't invite any Republicans. When Florio meets with the new legislature this month, there will be nothing but Republicans.

After that first, Democrats-only meeting, Florio and the legislative leadership passed the largest tax increase ever, in any state. Republicans objected, the people of New Jersey objected, but what did that matter to a man hailed by the press for his boldness in facing "tough choices"?

It started mattering soon enough, when "Impeach Florio" bumperstickers sprouted across the state while grassroot anti-tax, anti-Florio groups turned into a statewide alliance that swept Republicans into office in last November's midterm elections. When the tax package was passed, the Democrats held a 43 to 37 edge in the state Assembly and 23 to 17 in the state Senate. Now the Republicans hold majorities of 58 to 22 and 27 to 13, both sufficient to override a Florio veto.

The Democrats, as lame ducks, tried to get the last laugh. In their final week in office the Senate voted to overturn the entire Florio tax package in a partisan ploy to force the incoming Republicans to raise taxes in order to close the expected one-to-two-billion-dollar budget shortfall. The Republicans, who for two years have been castigating the Democrats for the tax hike, found themselves criticizing the Democrats for trying to get rid of

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it. However, the ploy failed when a few Democrats in the Assembly refused to go along.

Over the last decade, companies were attracted to New Jersey because the state economy was booming under President Reagan and Republican Governor Tom Kean, and it was less expensive to live and work in New Jersey than in New York. Taxes on high-end homes and offices were a steady source of revenue for the state.

Florio changed all that. His budget made New Jersey among the highest-taxed states in the nation. It doubled the top tax rate from 3.5 to 7 per cent, with smaller increases in lower-income brackets. The sales tax jumped from 6 to 7 per cent. And since Florio redistributed $700 million in funds for education away from wealthier districts to poorer ones, already-high property taxes will go even higher. David Goldman of Polyconomics—located in Morristown, N.J.—predicted that "government revenues could decline by 5 to 10 per cent through the combination of economic recession, tax sheltering by high-income individuals, the end of corporate relocation to the state, [and] out-of-state purchases of taxed consumer items."

The Florio administration estimated that the one-cent increase in the sales tax would bring in $44 million the first year from the trucking industry alone. But in the first three weeks after the increase kicked in, *12* heavy trucks were sold in New Jersey, compared with 702 in the same period the previous year. Purchasers simply went to Delaware and Pennsylvania.

What's a Republican to do? In general, they would be well advised to focus more on leaner government and less on who's to blame, since the Republican Kean paved the way for the Democrat Florio. Kean's budgets grew from roughly $5 billion in 1982 to $12 billion in 1989, and the state payroll increased from roughly 46,000 to 85,000. Had Kean only been more provident and not increased spending (in real terms), New Jersey would have an $8.2-billion budget. Florio's is $14.3 billion.

They must also look at incentives. Currently capital gains are taxed as regular income. If they were excluded, wholly or partially, a significant disincentive to relocate to the state will have been eradicated.

Christine Todd Whitman, who very nearly unseated Senator Bill Bradley in 1990, now leads the short list of Republicans to challenge Florio in 1993. She urges a rollback of the sales tax. "People can point to particular empty storefronts," she says, as a result of the one-cent increase. However, she does not believe the entire tax package can be repealed until the 11 per cent increase in spending has been cut.

When asked how to trim spending, some Republicans urge cutting certain departments. Others talk of a version of the Grace Commission, which at President Reagan's request came up with some $20 billion to cut from federal spending. On the whole, the GOP is ambivalent about how to proceed.

What they have done so far is not promising. For example, they did not anoint GOP Senate Minority Leader John Dorsey as majority leader. Dorsey, a conservative and well-respected legislator, was replaced by Donald DiFrancesco. DiFrancesco, clearly a bright fellow and more politically adroit than Dorsey, is a moderate who, as state Conservative Caucus leader John Scott said, is "able to straddle both camps," which translates into the same-but-less approach.

It was Republicans like DiFrancesco and incoming Assembly Speaker Chuck Haytaian who, post-November, slowly and quietly began saying: Okay, we'll drop the sales tax to 6 per cent—which was received with a resounding: Big deal. When the Democrats voiced plans to repeal the entire package, Haytaian first denounced them as cowards, then tried to call their bluff: "Go ahead; make my day."

Republicans don't need Clint Eastwood to control the legislative agenda. They have clear mandates, and on issues other than taxes. One is opposition to Florio's extremely unpopular and draconian gun-control bill. Another, overlooked by the press and Republicans themselves, is abortion.

Some 90 per cent of the candidates endorsed by N.J. Right to Life in November won their legislative seats. In 1989, many Democrats rode Florio's coattails to office, but the few Republican pro-lifers who ran won in districts where Florio finished strong. And John Tomicki, former executive director of Right to Life, contends that Mrs. Whitman, "had she been pro-life, would be in the U.S. Senate today."

Republicans have been trying to control the legislature here for twenty years; now they do. There is no question what is expected of them. The question is how they will perform. □

Now It Can Be Told

RICHARD C. CARPENTER

ATHENS

GREECE for 15 years following the fall of the Colonels was a cauldron of political ferment, and it was widely suspected that Soviet covert operations had a lot to do with it.

The Soviets of course denied any such activity. But now, with the breakup of the Soviet empire, we are getting confirmation from several directions, starting with a former deputy director of the KGB mission in Athens, Viktor P. Gundarev. He paid a dramatic return visit here last fall to reveal a number of covert operations which, as he delicately put it, "I suppose are not very well known."

Speaking at an international conference hosted jointly by Roy Godson's Washington-based National Strategy Information Center and Greece's conservative-oriented Foundation for Political Studies and Education. Mr. Gundarev said that a major aim of the KGB's foreign-policy operations in Greece was "to spoil American–Greek relations, especially regarding military bases." He told of how the KGB at one point orchestrated a massive peace demonstration near the Acropolis and even had a hand in the repeated "disfigurement" of a larger-than-life-size bronze statue of Harry S. Truman located in central Athens.

On a broader scale, he said, KGB officers would channel pro-Soviet information to Greek leaders, especially on issues such as the purported advantages of removing American nuclear weapons from Greece: the KGB sponsored active measures "supporting the idea of a nuclear-free zone in the Bal-

Mr. Carpenter, NR's Athens correspondent, has lived in Greece since 1981.

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kans" and "compromising the idea of the presence of nuclear weapons on the territory of Greece." (The anti-Western Socialist Andreas Papandreou was an avid proponent of the no-nukes notion. Sheer coincidence, right?)

Among numerous specific actions, Mr. Gundarev listed infiltrating the Greek press; manipulating the marriage between the shipping heiress Christina Onassis and Soviet shipping bureaucrat Sergei Kauzov, in order to exploit the vast Onassis commercial fleet; "compromising the idea of the construction of a petroleum gas pipeline from Iran to Turkey, Greece, and other European countries"; and discrediting various individuals who inconvenienced the Soviets in one way or another.

One of these individuals was the anti-socialist Constantine Mitsotakis, now Prime Minister. The KGB spread disinformation on Mr. Mitsotakis, presenting him as an incapable politician and a "Western lackey." Contrariwise, Andreas Papandreou was portrayed in a positive light.

Similarly, Mr. Gundarev said, the KGB manipulated the Greek press to present GRU defector Sergei Bokhan as a drunkard and womanizer who "never had access to serious operational information since he was for many years under cover, not at the headquarters of the GRU." When Mr. Bokhan springheeled Westward (see "A Surfeit of Spies," *NR*, Nov. 15, 1985) he disclosed, inter alia, the theft through Greece of the secrets of the shoulder-fired "Stinger" missiles then being supplied by the U.S. to freedom-fighters in Afghanistan.

About Paul Anastasi, a foreign correspondent for the *New York Times* and London's *Daily Telegraph* who spent a lot of time exposing Soviet covert operations in Greece, Mr. Gundarev said the KGB was interested in "presenting him as a foreign agent working against the interests of Greek democracy and the progressive [read: leftist] Greek press."

Mr. Gundarev's remarks coincided with another set of disclosures: documentation on the international financing of Communist Parties by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). According to documents brought before the Russian Federal Parliament, the pivotal company used in Greece was Vek. Letters from Vek

Roberto Parada

to the CPSU Politburo were signed by Yiannis Mavromatis, the financial operations chief for the Communist Party of Greece (KKE).

In one letter, Mr. Mavromatis stressed the "extensive" commercial activity conducted by Vek with Soviet support over the past seven years. "Comrades," he concluded, "we express warm gratitude to your party for the aid you grant us, which enables the representation [of Vek] in Moscow to become a basic source of revenue for our party."

The Mavromatis letters and Soviet Politburo documents show other Greek companies involved. These included EnerVek, which carried out ship repairs in cooperation with the Soviet Ministry of Industry, and TechnoVek, which imported and exported high-technology equipment as a function of its cooperation with the Leningrad Technological Institute.

Vek also served as the exclusive representative in Greece of the Soviet firm Promsirio Imports, which sold metallurgical by-products on the Greek market. This, according to Mr. Mavromatis's letter, was "an important source of financing and support for our party's policy." Finally, Vek was among numerous Greek companies the documents list as being owed money by the Soviets, along with the KKE's official daily propaganda organ, *Rizospastis*.

According to these and other Soviet press reports, the KKE appears to have been the fourth largest recipient of covert Soviet financing among non-ruling Communist Parties worldwide—trailing only the CPs of the U.S.A., Finland, and France.

These revelations have aggravated the current crisis within the Greek Communist movement, which over the past year has been split between the hard-line KKE and the moderate-reformist offshoot known as Coalition of the Left and Progress (*Synaspismos*). The two parties have exchanged bitter public accusations about the KKE's financing, fixed assets, and capital reserves.

According to the former Secretary General of the KKE, Grigoris Farakos, who resigned from the party in May, Moscow's backing of the party was not restricted to entrepreneurial activities. Mr. Farakos acknowledged that up to two-thirds of the KKE Central Committee's budgetary outlays were covered by covert funds. He did not, however, confirm reports from Moscow that bulk cash payments from the CPSU's International Solidarity Fund were ordinarily dispatched via diplomatic pouch to the Soviet embassy in Athens for deilvery to the KKE by local KGB bagmen. (Some reports from Moscow assert the KKE also received 350 to 400 million drachmas per year in "extraordinary economic reinforcements" known as "dollarships.")

For his remarks Mr. Farakos was officially described as an "apostate." A KKE Central Committee report portrayed him as leading a hypocritical "defamation campaign" rooted in "something beyond anti-Communism. . . . It is an attempt to wound the best [quality] that Communists have to display: international solidarity." Understandably, controversy over the KKE's financing was rife at the party's 14th congress in December.

For the next installment, Mr. Gundarev intends to return to Athens to make detailed disclosures about how the Soviets cultivated and maintained an intense climate of anti-Americanism in Greece over 15 years. Might some further financial revelations be included as well? Stay tuned. □

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help!!!!

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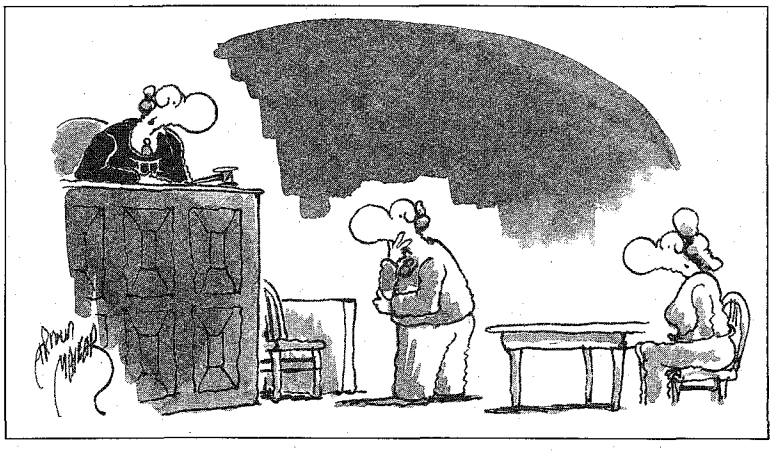
At the First Turn

IBM's imploding.
  Pan Am just went *splat!*
GM's disappearing
  Like the Cheshire cat.
Mr. Bush is pulling
  All the organ stops.
Democrats are running
  Like the Keystone Cops.

W. H. VON DREELE



"That's your entire defense? Saying, 'Women!' and shaking your head back and forth?"

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MAKIELSKI Chicago Tribune
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH I CAN'T DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT I'LL VOTE AT ALL IN 1992.
THEN I'LL PUT YOU DOWN FOR CUOMO.
POLLS

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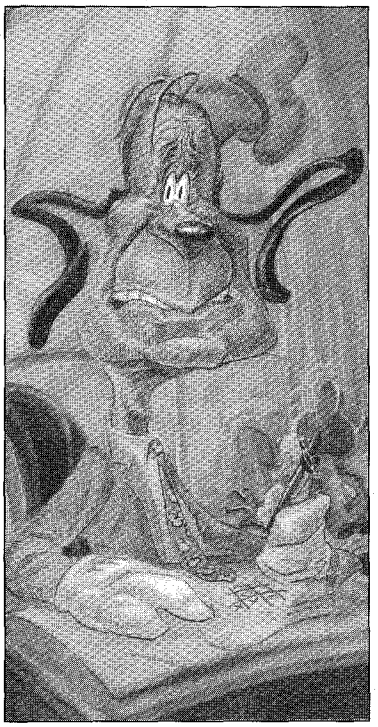

Election 1992

THE GOOFY POLITICS OF GEORGE BUSH

Taxes, quotas, the New World Order—George Bush can't resist moving left. Ronald Reagan left behind a conservative opportunity. Why is the President making it a liberal one?

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

"POOR AUSTEN," said F. E. Smith of the lackluster British Conservative politician, Austen Chamberlain. "He always plays the game—and he always loses it." The epigram does not quite fit George Bush. About him one would have to say: "He always loses the game even when he wins it." He is the kind of gentlemanly competitor who fights hard to win but who then hands the cup to his defeated rival to show no hard feelings. Thus, Mr. Bush's first term has been a set of variations on the theme of "Conservative Votes, Liberal Victories" (not wholly coincidentally, the title of a book by Patrick J. Buchanan.)

To say this is to make a judgment not only about Mr. Bush, but also about the political situation of the moment. There are occasions, for instance wartime, when a bipartisan outlook is the right and sensible one. There are times when a broad consensus unites major politicians of all parties—for instance, the long consensus in the U.S. over the "containment" of the Soviet Union. But American politics today is more akin to a religious war (or to a number of overlapping religious wars) than to an Establishment game of Ins and Outs. The main battle is, of course, that between liberalism and conservatism. The problem for liberals is that their decline has reached the point at which their hold on power is seriously threatened. The problem for conservatives is that George Bush is apparently unaware of the fact and of the opportunities it offers.

Liberaldom

THE DECLINE of American liberalism has been a long-drawn-out affair. In the 1964 election, southern whites, the disregarded spear-carriers of the Roosevelt coalition till then, started their march rightward. By 1976 only a minority of them voted for Jimmy Carter, even though he was the first Southerner to have a real shot at the Presidency since the Civil War. But the coalition started to collapse in earnest in 1980 when northern blue-collar workers deserted the Democrats in large numbers to vote for Ronald Reagan. Their defection finally robbed the Democratic Party nationally of its automatic majority status and led to the long Republican "lock" on the Presidency.

But the liberal coalition—though reduced to feminists, blacks, and white middle-class liberals unable to win a national election—remained surprisingly powerful. It managed to preserve its favorite spending programs under President Reagan; it hobbled the Administration's policy on Central America and arms control; it forced President Bush to abandon his election pledge and raise taxes; and it imposed a general obstacle to conservative policies during the Reagan–Bush years.

Liberal influence rested on a tripod of institutions and a fruitful political strategy. First, liberals predominated in those institutions of government that were not subject to direct democratic election—the courts, the bureaucracy, and in particular the "alphabet soup" of government agencies such as the FTC, the EEOC, the FEC, etc.

Second, America's cultural institutions—the media, publishing, universities, charitable foundations, even Hollywood—had been radicalized by the Sixties. Sociologists Rothman and Lichter showed that the "media elite" had voted 51 per cent for Jimmy Carter and only 25 per cent for Ronald Reagan when the latter won in a landslide. As a result journalists instinctively

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framed controversies in a liberal way, relied on liberal sources for quotes ("experts say, however . . ."), and leant generally to the liberal side. It wasn't bias, of course. How could it be? All their colleagues saw things the same way.

Third, Congress was firmly in Democratic and liberal hands. Incumbents had arranged the rules in order to entrench themselves by such devices as free congressional mailing to constituents. Money too went overwhelmingly to incumbents, starving challengers of the resources for an upset campaign. And they were finally protected by their constituents' relative lack of interest in their voting records in Washington. As opinion analyst William Schneider points out: the lower the office, the less people vote "ideologically." Liberal control of Congress seemed impregnable.

And, finally, this interlocking alliance was lubricated by a tax-spend-and-elect strategy. A liberal foundation would press for a spending program; the media would report its demands sympathetically ("experts say . . ."); the Congress would duly pass legislation to implement it; on the rare occasions when Republican resistance prevented this, the federal courts would insist that the Constitution required it; and tax dollars would flow to another liberal constituency which in return would deliver votes. That is how America was governed for about twenty years.

"HEY, TIMES ARE TOUGH, RECYCLING IS IN — I SAY LET'S GO WITH IT!"

The Reagan Insurrection

ONLY ONE development threatened the smooth working of this system (let us call it "liberaldom"). Republicans kept winning presidential elections: five out of the last six in fact. Over time that was bound to influence the political process.

Sure enough, when George Bush became President in 1989, the three legs of the liberal tripod of power were beginning to look shaky. After 11 years of Republican federal and judicial appointments, the courts could no longer be relied upon to enforce the liberal agenda on racial quotas, school busing, criminal-arrest procedures, abortion, and the Constitution.

Liberal control of the media too was being undermined by the proliferation of satellite and cable stations, which diluted the power of the three major liberal networks. Still more subversive was the rise of talk radio where conservative hosts like the ebullient Rush Limbaugh were the dominant figures. (Hollywood liberalism reacted to this threat by making movies in which talk-show hosts were the villains.)

Democratic control of Congress was similarly threatened by an ideological and demographic time-bomb. By 1989 some 40 per cent of Americans described themselves as moderates, 38 per cent as conservatives, and only 18 per cent as liberals. Under Schneider's Law above, the implications of this change were felt most immediately in presidential elections. As Humphrey Taylor and Robert Leitman point out in *The (Un)changing Political Landscape*, "If liberals vote Democratic and conservatives vote Republican, as they tend to, this puts the Democrats in the unenviable position of having to win about three-fourths of the moderate voters to win a majority in a presidential election."

But polls also showed a long-term political effect on party identification. Voters under 35 identified with the Republicans over the Democrats by margins of between 3 and 12 per cent while Democrats were concentrated among older voters. Unless an economic depression or some epochal scandal like Watergate intervened, therefore, the Republicans were likely to become the majority party around the turn of the century.

There was, however, a snag. At the same time as party identification shifted to favoring the Right, it was also becoming weaker. More and more voters were swayed by single issues, by taxes and the cost of government, by a general hostility to politicians and Washington D.C., and by economic prosperity.

The overall implication, however, was clear: provided that the Republicans stayed on the popular side of issues—which means provided public attention was fixed on *their* core issues like taxes—they were likely to become the majority party in time.

Here President Bush had been bequeathed a priceless legacy by the Reagan years. The tax-spend-and-elect strategy of the Democrats had been rendered inoperative by three fiscal changes of the 1980s. The elimination of "indexing" under the 1981 tax reforms deprived the Federal Government of automatic increases in revenue due to inflation. The Gramm–Rudman mechanism for reducing the deficit laid down that if the requisite spending cuts were not agreed between the Presidency and Congress, an automatic process of sequestration would impose them. And President Reagan had established a credible threat to veto any tax hikes.

Together, these changes forced the government to bring its spending into line with revenue that could in-

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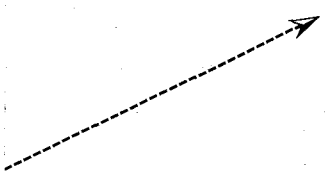

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crease only as a result of economic growth. The federal deficit fell from 6.3 per cent of gross national product in 1983 to 3 per cent in 1989; and the annual rate of increase in federal spending, which had been 11 per cent in the ten years to 1985, was cut to 4 per cent annually from 1985 to 1988. As a result, it became all but impossible for the Democrats to buy votes with spending programs since such programs had to be, in effect, self-financing. When a classic liberal welfare measure, the Catastrophic Health Insurance Act, was passed in 1988, it included a tax surcharge on older taxpayers who were the bill's intended beneficiaries. The result was popular outcry, the heartwarming sight of Representative Dan Rostenkowski nearly being lynched by a mob of senior citizens, and cancellation of the law.

Kinder, Gentler, More Liberal

WHEN beneficiaries of welfare legislation riot to secure its repeal, the world is a different place. This vivid confirmation of the bankruptcy of liberal politics at the start of Mr. Bush's watch should have told him something important. All he had to do was to defend the fiscal mechanisms left by President Reagan—and his Democratic opponents would fall to squabbling among themselves over which programs would get the limited funds available.

But Mr. Bush had different ideas. "A kinder, gentler America" is generally agreed to be the phrase that best expresses his political intentions. As rhetoric goes, it is a standard piece of vapid benevolence. But three meanings can be plausibly read into it. At its most abstract, it expresses Mr. Bush's distaste for the more rugged aspects of American individualism. That leads directly to the second meaning—a tacit concession that the Reagan years were, as their liberal critics allege, years of greed, rapacity, and vulgarity. A kinder, gentler government would thus accept greater regulation of economy and society in the common good. The third meaning is that since the Bush Administration (no longer led astray by unreasonable Reaganite ideologues) will be actuated by these common concerns, it should enjoy the cooperation of all reasonable people.

Mr. Bush has acted upon these principles, seeking bipartisan compromises with the Democratic leadership in Congress and appointing "moderate" critics to posts

President Butterfly

POOR George Bush. Little more than a year ago, he was looking down from the Olympian heights of a virtually unprecedented 80 per cent approval rating. These days the cameras revel in showing him crawling out from under a table in Tokyo after getting sick at a state dinner. Certainly he's not the first Western leader to make a spectacle of himself in a part of the world where the locals view such occurrences as portents of divine displeasure. Back when Margaret Thatcher visited Peking to negotiate the future of Hong Kong, a stumble down the steps of the Great Hall of the People had folks whispering that she was kowtowing to Mao (don't laugh, they turned out to be right). Best not to speculate what the Japanese made of President Bush's first appearance in their country, at a Toys 'R' Us chain in Osaka with Geoffrey the Giraffe.

In many ways the President's trip provides a perfect illustration of the chaos that has beset the Administration since the end of Desert Storm. Originally planned for early December to deal with regional security and the like, the trip was canceled after Democrats began hollering that Bush was spending too much time abroad. Throw in Pat Buchanan's increasingly unabashed protectionism (his latest fund-raising letter declares that the "92-month-long economic boom has been put on a fast track to Mexico"), and the President's trip was not only rescheduled, it was recast. The trip was now, Bush said, about "jobs, jobs, jobs." Overnight, another shift in presidential positions could be detected.

The groundwork had been laid by Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher hinting on *Meet the Press* that the White House agreed Japan was partially to blame for a recession the President had previously said didn't exist and was over anyway. Administration officials then let it out that the focus in Japan would be to make the Japanese buy a given number of American autos that even Americans no longer believe are good buys. And President Bush himself started referring to the Free Trade Agreement with Mexico as a "fair-trade agreement." In short, the President has again started out with the right position only to let it wither away in an effort to please all sides. To make matters even worse, he confirmed his establishment image by toting along 18 American corporate chiefs, including the heads of Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors.

"No one's ever accused George Bush of being a man of the people, but to go and hang out with these guys only confirms the worst stereotypes," says Richard Rahn, formerly chief economist with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and now president of Novecon Corporation. "If he wanted to take along some Americans he should at least have picked some entrepreneurial types in new industries."

To be sure, Japan does discriminate against many imports; the huge disparity between Japanese and U.S. rice prices will tell you that. But letting Lee Iacocca make the case dilutes the argument, for the simple reason that American cars don't sell even in open markets. In three years in Hong Kong, completely open to the Big Three, I can't recall seeing one Chrysler, though Mercedeses, Volvos, and BMWs were common. The long and short of it is that however unfair the Japanese may be there is

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within his Administration (Arthur Fletcher to the Civil Rights Commission, William Reilly to the EPA). But insofar as these moves are an attempt to avoid conflict, they are a miscalculation. Leading Democrats might well be reasonable as private persons, but they are also politicians with a constituency to consider. And as the Democratic Party has declined into a "rainbow rump" of feminists, minority pressure groups, and academic liberals, so its left ideological commitment has become more pronounced. On all matters of importance, the congressional leadership must insist on the lion's share of any compromise.

As for appointing critics, that merely ensures disagreement will be initially confined within the Administration. That is a very modest benefit to be set against serious drawbacks. For the conflict gets into the press eventually via leaks that are often more damaging than an outside attack would have been. Meanwhile, the critics are bureaucratically strengthened in any dispute; the Administration is made more vulnerable to embarrassment; and any resulting compromise is pushed left. Thus, Mr. Bush's general wave of re-regulation, the Clean Air Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (respectively the provinces of Mr. Reilly and Mr. Fletcher), has imposed costly and burdensome regulations upon the economy with little public debate.

Giving Away the Economy

AN ADMINISTRATION, internally divided between conservatives and moderates and in addition seeking compromises with a Democratic Congress, was bound to drift in a liberal direction. As long as Gramm–Rudman and the President's pledge of "no new taxes" remained in place, however, there was a limit to such drift. There would simply be no new money for liberal projects. Hence the chief political controversy of the first twenty months of Mr. Bush's first term was whether taxes should be raised "to reduce the deficit." And taxes were duly raised in the budget agreement of 1990.

The economics of this agreement does not fall under the scope of this article. What can be said, however, is that it accommodated the largest increase in domestic federal spending since 1945. Gramm–Rudman was abandoned precisely because it would have required

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no way to protect our producers without punishing our consumers and ultimately making our own economy less efficient. If Bush really were interested in opening markets, he would more profitably spend his time trying to forge free-trade agreements with Eastern Europe, to help pressure the sensitive GATT negotiations in the right direction, and to foil the Fortress Europeans who threaten to transform the New World Order into an earth with three economic blocs perpetually trying to keep out one another's goods.

Now, no one really thinks Bush a protectionist. Ironically, at the same time the President was "getting tough" with Tokyo his Vice President was up in New Hampshire pleading with voters not to send the Administration a protectionist message by siding with Pat Buchanan. More probably, as Brian Hindley of the London School of Economics notes, he is just responding to pressure. "If Congress were left to its own devices," he says, "they would probably pass a great deal of protectionist measures. In bashing Japan just a little, the Bush gamble is that doing a moderately bad thing will hold them off from doing extremely bad things. Of course that's an extremely dangerous game."

Indeed it is. Just as he did with taxes and civil rights, Bush has opted for the pre-Reagan Republican tack of the same but less. This strategy has already yielded us a Civil Rights Act that re-establishes quotas, a Clean Air Act whose costs are about to hit an economy already in recession, a tax increase that has led to even more government spending, and an-about-to-be-launched economic package that at this writing appears to put back into place all the special-interest barnacles that were the target of the Reagan Revolution.

The consequences are especially grave in the area of trade—until now one of the issues that put Bush on the side of the angels vis-a-vis Buchanan—because the potential for political demagoguery and economic mischief is so high. While Buchanan accurately takes credit for forcing Bush in his direction, even before he threw his hat into the ring, Administration officials such as Trade Representative Carla Hills (who inexplicably was sent neither to Tokyo nor to GATT negotiations) were more comfortable with terms such as "open markets," "market access," and "free and fair trade." The difference may be subtle but it remains significant.

"Bush's increasing use of the term 'fair trade' is a sign he's lost his grasp of policy on trade and sets up a bidding war that he is guaranteed to lose because the Democrats will always go higher," says James Bovard, author of *The Fair Trade Fraud*. "Gephardt's already offered the bill to prove it," he adds, referring to the Missouri Democrat's proposal to limit Japanese auto sales if the trade deficit does not go down. All Bush has done with this trip is inflame appetites no Republican Administration can ever satisfy.

To do it on the Asian stage, moreover, only courts disaster at a ticklish moment in trade negotiations and sends a perilous signal to a critical part of the world economy. Geoffrey the Giraffe could probably have told him that, but, as usual, it was Kipling who put it best:

And the end of the fight is a
tombstone white with the name
of the late deceased,
And the epitaph drear: "A Fool lies
here who tried to hustle the East."

—WILLIAM MCGURN

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major spending cuts in, among other items, the entitlement programs that account for 48 per cent per cent of total spending and the largest part of its annual increase. If the deficit is a serious economic problem, as I certainly believe, it can hardly be a benefit to replace one system of expenditure control with another which has proved less effective on the test of experience and which was chosen for that very reason.

Whatever the economics, the budget deal proved a political disaster. Deprived of the potent tax issue, congressional Republicans lost ground in the 1990 mid-term elections in which they had earlier expected to improve their position. Once President Bush had abandoned opposition to a tax hike, moreover, the Democrats made the issue "what kind of tax hike—a Democratic one designed to achieve 'fairness' or a Republican one designed to raise revenue?" That concentrated public attention on the Democrats' core issue of equality and highlighted the unattractive elitist aspects of the GOP's image. Meanwhile, the absence of a tax constraint on higher spending saw a flowering of Democratic programs that had hitherto been concealed. And as 1991 wore on, Mr. Bush was driven by events into proposing bigger and bigger cuts in defense expenditure that the "Chinese wall" in the budget deal had been designed to avert. The difference was that whereas before the 1990 deal the defense savings would have been redeployed to deficit-reduction under Gramm–Rudman, now they will be allocated to domestic spending in the liberal interest. All in all, a fiasco.

Not for the first time, a President was saved by a war. The success of Desert Storm gave him high approval ratings with the general public, restored him in conservative esteem, banished the "wimp" image, probably for good, and eclipsed the budget deal in the public memory. He had won himself a second chance.

No White Males Need Apply

IT CAME in the form of racial and sexual quotas. Quotas are perhaps the single most important issue to the liberal coalition. They embody the modern liberal view that group rights should take precedence over individual rights in law and custom. Support for them unites all elements of the liberal coalition: the old civil-rights leadership, feminists, and white liberals in the federal bureaucracy, the media, and the universities. And they strengthen and lubricate the coalition, giving patronage to civil-rights leaders, added powers of regulation to the bureaucracy, and an incentive for people in the favored groups to vote for liberal politicians.

Conservatives had, of course, attacked the principle of quotas for over two decades. To bar someone, who has never been guilty of discrimination, from employment or promotion, in order to benefit someone else, who has never been a victim of discrimination, simply because each belongs to a racial or sexual group that has been respectively advantaged or disadvantaged in history, is plainly an injustice to the individual and an expression of reverse racism. As quotas spawned new classes of disadvantaged people—small businesses, men in general and white males in particular, this argument had increasing appeal. Indeed, subterranean resentment over quotas probably accounted in large part for one of the most misunderstood phenomena of recent politics—the so-called "gender gap."

This expresses not the liberalism of women, as most media comments suggest, but the collapse of Democratic support among men. Reagan, for instance, had a lead among men of 61 per cent to 37 per cent in the 1984 election against Walter Mondale. The gender gap achieved no more than to hold Reagan's lead among women down to a healthy 8 per cent. And although women finally voted Democratic by the slimmest of margins in 1988 (50 per cent for Dukakis, 49 per cent for Bush), the gender gap handed Bush 58 per cent of men, 67 per cent of white men, and 73 per cent of southern white men—and, of course, a substantial overall victory. Quotas were the Republican Party's "fairness issue."

This well-kept secret emerged in 1990 with Jesse Helms's victory in the North Carolina race. It grew in salience when President Bush gave his first reluctant veto of the Kennedy Civil Rights Bill, rightly interpreting it as a quota measure, and discovered the veto was popular. And it gathered steam throughout 1991 when the civil-rights bill was brought forward a second time and negotiations between Congress and the Senate began over how to avoid a second veto. Liberals were in a quandary: they could neither abandon quotas nor defend them honestly. Mr. Bush had the popular side of a major issue. And then the Clarence Thomas confirmation fight demonstrated that Mr. Bush's posture was even stronger that it seemed.

Clarence Thomas was a black conservative firmly opposed by the traditional civil-rights leadership precisely because he was against quotas. Despite that, black Americans ended up supporting his nomination by substantially larger margins than whites—70 per cent compared to 50 per cent. Black political attitudes, moreover, were already showing a shift to the right. Polls showed Bush to be about twice as popular as Reagan with black respondents. That could prove catastrophic for those Democratic senators and congressmen who rely for their margin of victory on a monolithic black loyalty. Of the 17 senate Democrats up for election this year, no fewer than seven won their 1986 victories on that basis.

Feminist claims to represent American women, denouncing Thomas and endorsing Anita Hill, were similarly undermined when substantial majorities of women told pollsters they wanted Thomas confirmed (53 per cent) and believed him over Hill (45 per cent). And on top of everything else, the liberal coalition emerged from the Thomas nomination battle believing its own media propaganda and so parroting precisely the wrong lessons: a) that Thomas won because of a ruthless Republican campaign akin to the Willie Horton ads in 1988, but b) that this fortunately didn't mat-

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ter because the hearings established sexual harassment as a grave national epidemic which the Democrats could exploit in 1992. One might have supposed that even liberal Democrats could not devise a policy that would drive still more men into the Republican column; but one would have underestimated them.

Mr. Bush, then, emerged from the Thomas affair with a principled stance on quotas that had popular backing against an opposition that could not deliver the votes. Within a month, he had signed the quota bill.

Again, whatever the legal arguments—and even a sympathetic commentator like Terry Eastland in *The American Spectator* concedes that gains in the fine print were paid by major concessions of principle—the political implications are uniformly bad. It undercuts black conservatives, Mr. Bush's allies in the minority community, by abandoning the ground of principle on which they have taken their stand. It is a concession that will build up the prestige and influence of their rivals in the civil-rights leadership. It thus strengthens the liberal coalition which, no longer embarrassed on the issue, declares that even the use of the word "quota" is an indication of racism. It has alienated the conservative wing of the Republican Party, prompting Pat Buchanan to run in New Hampshire. It has handed the quota issue to the former Nazi, David Duke, thus making it less respectable for other candidates (perhaps including Mr. Bush later in the campaign). And it will reduce the social-*cum*-cultural appeal of the Republicans to male voters, driving blue-collar "Reagan Democrats" into political apathy. Once again, a fiasco—and a completely unneccessary one.

New World, Old Order

MR. BUSH is commonly excused at this point on the grounds that he is not, after all, a "domestic President." His speciality is foreign policy. But an enduring foreign policy depends ultimately on domestic support. And that depends in turn on whether a political leader can articulate a long-term strategic vision with broad popular appeal. President Bush's version of this is the New World Order.

Let us concede at once that the phrase, with its overtones of a naïve Wilsonian internationalism, is an unfortunate one. What made matters worse, however, was the President's failure to give it any real and consistent substance. His first formulation, seeking liberal support for the Gulf War, seemed to endorse a Wilsonian deference to the United Nations. His postwar interpretation treated the stability of the existing world order as a U.S. interest to be pursued by an amoral *Realpolitik*. In practice this led to a series of miscalculations toward Iraq, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union in which United States support for an inherently unstable *status quo* only promoted instability. But even if this indiscriminate stabilization had succeeded, it would have exerted no particular appeal to the American people.

To do that, Mr. Bush would have needed a policy combining the pursuit of U.S. interests with the promotion of American values (such as democracy and free markets). Neither is enough on its own. Taken together, though, each justifies and restrains the other. In particular, considerations of the national interest would prevent the promotion of democracy becoming a rash globalist crusade; and support for open markets would restrain nationalism from degenerating into a short-sighted protectionism. If the New World Order had been defined in those terms, the resulting "*Pax Americana* in sheep's clothing" would have been broadly acceptable to Americans in general and conservatives in particular.

As it is, Mr. Bush's lack of vision has proved politically disastrous. The Democrats, whose concept of a good foreign policy is no foreign policy, are telling Americans that the answer to a world in which the spread of protectionism threatens to interact nastily with the spread of nuclear weapons is either an increase in federal spending on education or some expression of hostility toward Japan. The Right is distracted by a virtual civil war between the two extremes of crusading democratic globalists and protectionists-*cum*-isolationists. And Mr. Bush himself, as William McGurn demonstrates above, is being dragged along in the direction of these various nostrums because he has been unable to formulate his own firm response. A fiasco, then, in the making.

Sleeping through the Eighties

IS THERE, as the psychiatrists say, a pattern here? Mr. Bush has consistently failed to recognize political opportunities when they presented themselves. He drew back almost instinctively from political victories on quotas and taxes. He could not make sense of a New World Order except in terms of the old. He did not see that he could preside over a historic shift away from the liberal hegemony in U.S. politics by the simple expedient of doing nothing. His reaction on all these occasions has been to compromise with the Democratic leadership in order to save it from outright defeat.

We cannot put this down to defects of character. Mr. Bush is a patriotic, experienced, and talented man. He has shown, on abortion, a willingness to endure political unpopularity in defense of an important principle. He displayed courage and a prudent risk-taking over the Gulf War. And when it comes to electioneering rather than governing, he gets good at politics.

His failure is essentially one of imagination. As Keynes pointed out, few people emancipate themselves from the views they acquire in early manhood. Mr. Bush formed his convictions in the 1940s when liberalism was the dominant set of ideas. He was himself a moderate conservative. But conservatives in those days lost everything except elections, and the lesson stuck.

All that changed in the 1980s, but Mr. Bush seems to have slept through the period. He was Vice President, professionally loyal, but his views scarcely changed.

So when as President he found liberalism on the ropes, he threw in the towel. □

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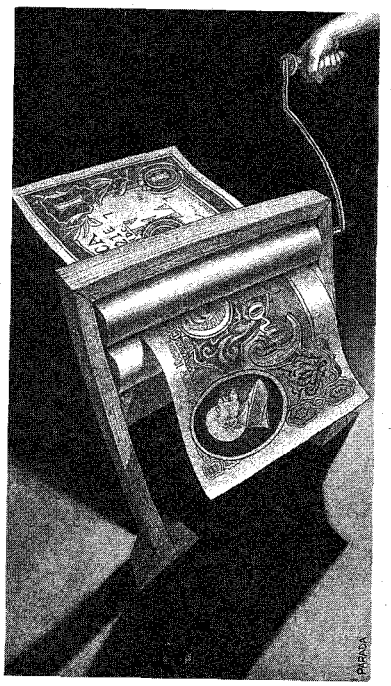

Post-Communist Economies

A HARD RUBLE FOR THE NEW REPUBLICS

Hyperinflation may be as serious a danger to the ex-Soviet republics as food shortages. But there is a remedy, developed by (of all people) John Maynard Keynes, the last time a Russian empire was breaking up.

ALAN WALTERS

IN 1918 the Allied forces, mainly British, landed in North Russia (Archangel and Murmansk) in order to support a non-Bolshevik government. The expedition was frustrated, however, by the collapse of the national currency, the ruble. John Maynard Keynes, then managing Britain's war finances, quickly introduced a new parallel hard currency in the form of a new ruble by lending the government £330,000 to provide the reserves for a currency board. Then both Russians and the troops could exchange Bank of England notes at a fixed rate of approximately 40 new-ruble bank notes to the pound, and vice versa, at the currency board. This enabled the British government to buy supplies for the troops, just as it encouraged production, commerce, and trade among Russians. The ruble was as good as sterling. Russians and others could readily accept rubles in exchange for real goods and services, secure in the knowledge that (at least as long as the currency board survived) it would hold its value. During the short life of the Northern government, the new ruble was stable and widely held as a safe store of value, whereas the old currency went the way of all Bolshevik rubles. (Incidentally, all the biographers of Keynes, as well as the editors of the 25 volumes of his "complete" collected writings, completely missed this episode. My colleagues Steve Hanke and Kurt Schuler rescued it from neglect.)

What about the new Russias? (I shall continue to call them the Russian Republics and the Russians rather than the CIS and the Cissies; the latter seems not quite the thing.) Is there not a lesson here—indeed a Keynes, if not a Keynesian, solution—for contemporary Russia and the other republics that emerge from the mess of the USSR? I think so. The collapse of the existing Russian ruble—currently trading at less than a penny a ruble—is as obvious as it is distressing. Following Keynes, the Russians would create a hard or *new* ruble to compete with the existing or *old* ruble. A currency board would be set up with the *sole* function of exchanging the new ruble against a specified hard currency at a *fixed* rate. As an illustration, suppose it is fixed to the dollar at one new ruble per dollar. Thus you would get, say, 99.5 new rubles in notes and coin for 100 greenbacks, and $99.5 in notes and coin for a hundred new-ruble notes—so that from the spread the currency board recovers its costs. Note that it swaps only *currency and coin*, not deposits, but of course the swap offer on currency will be arbitraged through the free market to deposits of new rubles at banks. The new rubles could be freely held by anyone and would count as legal tender. Similarly, the holding of either dollar notes or accounts would be declared quite legal. Freedom at last.

Redeemable Rubles

WHAT DO we need to make this work? First, the currency board needs hard-currency reserves so it can redeem its issue of hard rubles. It should hold at least 100 per cent reserves of dollars against its new-ruble issue. Only then will there be confidence in its promise of redemption of new rubles for dollars. My colleague and collaborator Steve Hanke has suggested that the only way to instill complete trust is to locate the currency board in a haven out of reach of the Russian government, such as Switzerland. Worth thinking about, but likely to be a nonstarter. The only way is for the Russian government or central bank to be aware of the great benefits it will get from having a convertible currency on the premises of the republic.

How much will it cost to equip all the republics with a hard-ruble currency board? That depends on how it is introduced. So let's begin with the outside estimate. Suppose that the new ruble *completely* and *instantly* replaces the old. Then as a most rough calculation, I believe that Russians would wish to hold about 20 billion of

Sir Alan Walters, vice chairman of AIG Trading Corporation in Washington, D.C., was chief economic advisor to Margaret Thatcher.

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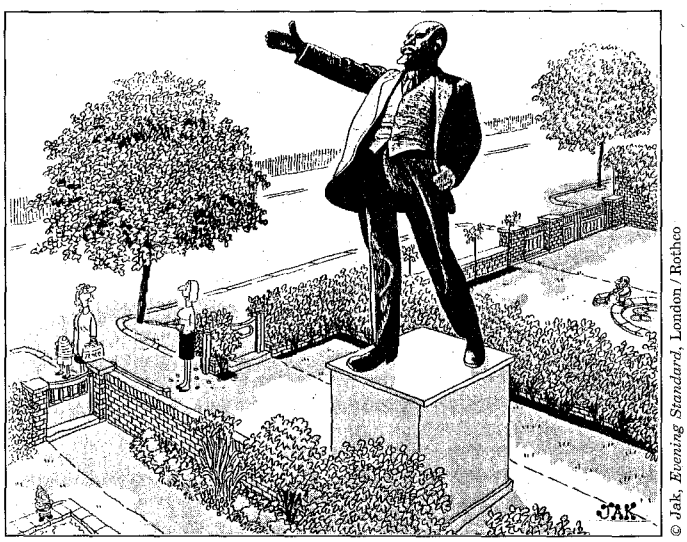
new-ruble notes and coin. Thus, to be on the safe side, the currency board would need some $30 billion in reserves. By an odd coincidence this is just about the value of the monetary gold that the Russians claim to have. (I suspect they have much more, but let's be nice and quash such suspicions.) So the government could lend this gold to form the capital of the currency board. In turn the currency board would sell the gold for dollars—or so as not to rile other gold holders it might simply borrow dollars with the gold as security. The new rubles would be issued to the government. And the government in turn would spend them—preferably by buying up old-ruble notes at an exchange rate freely determined by market supply and demand.

An alternative way of financing the new-ruble issue is for the aid-giving governments of the West to pony up the $30 billion. Again by an odd coincidence this is the amount which was suggested as the appropriate annual aid budget by the Harvard–Yavlinsky group in the "grand bargain" last year. For my part I would be opposed to such large sums in aid, for reasons which have been argued so forcefully over the years by Lord Bauer. Furthermore such sums will not be needed in practice. The process of reform would be a gradual one.

There would be no wholesale currency conversion from old to new. The old rubles would continue to be printed by the central bank and would continue to circulate and be accepted as legal tender. Why? I believe it is realistic to assume that the Russian republics will not reduce their massive budget deficits to manageable levels overnight or even over years. A major tax reform (mainly the introduction of VAT) is needed, and even with the best will in the world that will take a long time. Nor is the Russian government going to have ready and speedy access to ample loans either from foreigners or from its long-suffering people. The only way to close the budget gap is to print old rubles. (Note that the central bank cannot print new rubles unless it has received dollar notes in exchange.) Granted the large deficits, this would mean that there would be a continuing inflation, probably hyperinflation, in terms of old rubles. People would be induced to cut down their holdings of rapidly depreciating old rubles and switch to the new. Indeed the nice new ruble would drive out the bad old ruble—and incidentally make printing old rubles a worthless occupation. Thus governments would then either have to balance their books or earn a credit rating.

This seems to be contradicted by Gresham's Law—"Bad money drives out good." But Gresham's Law is valid only when the exchange rate between the bad and good is *fixed*. Bad and good money can live together if the exchange rate is determined freely by the market. From our experience in Latin American inflations and reforms, however, one suspects that the old ruble, with its rapidly declining value, will be less and less used except for small transactions.



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"My Arthur could never resist a bargain!"

But as the new ruble becomes the accepted currency, so foreign capital would flood in to take advantage of the high rate of return and security of currency. Similarly the large quantities of dollars, Deutsche Marks, etc. which are at present in the mattresses or Swiss bank accounts of Soviet citizens would be disinterred, swapped for new rubles, and invested or spent on Russian projects and goods.

Thus although one should be prepared for an eventual new-ruble issue of 30 billion, it would be preferable to use only, say, 5 billion of the gold supply as the government's initial contribution to the dollar reserves. The rest would come from the mattresses and Zurich as the new ruble is seen to be as good as the dollar. Then in a matter of a year or so the Russian people will have a stable money to serve as the basis for their further economic reform program.

Question Time

QUESTIONS? One obvious one is: Why go through the rigmarole of a currency board? Why not simply circulate the greenback? Apart from the obvious one of political pride in having one's own currency, there is the risk of loss. A burned dollar bill is a dollar lost to Russia, whereas a burned ruble note can easily be replaced by another. Second, and more important, much of the dollar reserve can be invested in income-bearing assets—and that income will accrue to Russia, whereas circulating greenbacks is making an interest-free loan to the United States. Not good business, at least for Russia.

A second question: If this is so good a system, why have not other countries practiced it? The short answer is: They have—and very successfully. Britain in her heyday, from 1844 to 1931, was on a currency board—and certainly sterling was stable and commanded wide respect. Today, and another heyday, the fastest-growing countries in the world are on currency boards—namely Hong Kong and Singapore.

A third question: Why the dollar? Why not the Deutsche Mark or the yen or even a bastard sort of basket currency such as the European Currency Unit (ECU)? The main reason is a combination of acceptability and simplicity. Although the German and Japanese records on inflation are somewhat better than that of the United States, the difference is small. And neither Germany nor Japan has the liberal and open regime of the United States monetary system. Mixtures of currencies complicate the currency board's business; and so far as I know ECUs are acceptable only at Harrods—not, I fear, the corner shop of every Russian. I conclude that the dollar is best.

I would not want to pretend that

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currency boards solve all, always. But I do think that they are the best alternative for Russia and the other ex-Communist states. Are they likely? I believe that some attempts will be made to prepare the way for a currency-board system—rather like the reforms we have seen in Poland since January 1990. I fear, however, that—again as in Poland—the reform will attempt to maintain the state's monopoly of the money supply and will not set up the hard ruble as a *parallel* currency. It will, so to speak, harden up the existing soft ruble.

The Deficit Factor

LIKE the zloty reform in Poland, this will take the form of first declaring convertibility and then pegging the existing ruble to (say) the dollar at (say) 200 to provide a "nominal anchor" for the currency. If this exchange rate is held through hell and high water, then ultimately there will be stability somewhere near the inflation rate of the United States. The trouble is that this requires a most restrained rate of expansion in the quantity of rubles issued. But this requirement will be quite inconsistent with the need for the governments to print rubles to cover their horrendous budget deficits. Ah, you may say, this misses the fact that the rhetoric of the reforms requires low and manageable deficits. Indeed the IMF insists on such. But the reforms also insist on the great state-owned enterprises being subject to market discipline—and this will mean erstwhile surpluses are converted into swinging losses; and a very large component of public revenue, the taxes on such surpluses, will disappear. The sharp decline of output, always so far associated with the first years of reform, will also balloon the budget deficit. (Is it really necessary to argue here in the United States that all budget deficits are bigger than expected?)

If one retains only the newly hardened ruble (200 to the dollar) and the government has to print a large amount of money to cover the deficit, then there will be too many rubles and eventually the currency will have to be depreciated. Once it goes soft its "as good as a dollar" reputation will be gone. It is, of course, *possible* to avoid printing money to cover deficits. The government could borrow, or it could receive "donations" (aid) from a grateful West anxious to conclude a "grand bargain." Alas, the CIS credit ratings are low and are unlikely to improve. And it is unlikely that the West will double the amount donated to the Third World (about $35 billion) to provide what the lobbyists for the "grand bargain" think is appropriate to bail out the former Soviet Union (about 5 per cent of Russia's GNP, or $100 per capita for five years).

I conclude that it is good policy to keep the old inflating ruble, freely floating in a free market, to enable the government to cover its obligations. I believe it would also be useful in avoiding the shock implied in hardening the existing ruble. The parallel hard and soft rubles would ease the transition to a free and open market economy.

Finally, it is worthy of note that Keynes's new ruble was a parallel currency. So I conjecture that Keynes would have approved of the reincarnation of his currency boards. After all it worked in 1918; why not in 1992? □

Homosexuality and Genetics

WHAT IS NORMAL?

If something is heritable, can it be called abnormal? But is homosexuality heritable?

STEVEN GOLDBERG

IN RECENT WEEKS the media have given wide exposure to the work of Michael Bailey and Richard Pillard. This coverage was justified. Bailey and Pillard provide powerful evidence for an hereditary component to homosexuality. While such a component has long been suspected, this work is the strongest argument for its existence.

However, the reports have almost universally misunderstood the meaning of Bailey and Pillard's conclusions as they relate to the question of psychological normality or abnormality. The reports have interpreted the conclusions as effectively demonstrating the normality of homosexual behavior. This is incorrect.

In essence, Bailey and Pillard conclude that, to the extent that homosexuality is innate, it should be considered a psychologically normal variation. This is certainly reasonable; it would be an exercise in pointless cruelty to assess as "abnormal" a behavior that, unlike hereditary blindness or an uncontrollable impulse to violence, is not inherently damaging to oneself, others, or society.

However, there is a crucial distinction that Bailey and Pillard did not make, a distinction between a predispositional and a *determinative* physiological factor. The latter would be a factor that generated basic sexual orientation *regardless of the environment in which the individual grew*.

Such a factor *would* render indefensible and cruel any assessment of homosexuality as psychologically abnormal. It would do so in the same way that such a factor renders discrimination on the basis of basic skin color indefensible and cruel. This is an analogy often used by spokesmen for the homosexual community; but the spokesmen invariably *assert* that which must be demonstrated—that homosexuality is, like basic skin color, the result of a physiologically *determinative* factor. Bailey and Pillard's own evidence argues against there being such a factor that causes much homosexuality.

Bailey and Pillard report that in half the cases of male identical twins

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of whom one is homosexual, the other is homosexual as well, while in only a fifth of the cases of male *non*-identical twins of whom one is homosexual is the other homosexual. (A tenth of the male population—and of pairs of male identical twins—is homosexual.) This certainly does indicate the importance of heredity, but it just as strongly indicates the importance of environment: in half the cases of male identical twins of whom one was homosexual, the other was *not*; since identical twins have identical genetic make-up, this homosexuality *must* be the result of environmental factors. (Whether this environmental element is a fetal accident, a family of the sort described by the Freudians, or something different is beside the point.) It is only when *both* twins are homosexual that it *could* be the case that the homosexuality is caused by an hereditary *determinative* factor (i.e., a factor that is sufficient to cause homosexuality no matter what the environment).

Now, the fact that a) when one identical twin is homosexual, the other is homosexual in 50 per cent of the cases, but b) when one non-identical twin is homosexual the other is homosexual in only 20 per cent of the cases, strongly suggests a physiological element—perhaps a physiological necessary condition. But this does *not* imply (and Bailey and Pillard do not claim that it implies) that it is ever the case that heredity alone is capable of generating homosexuality whatever the environment. The reason is that identical twins share a much more nearly identical familial environment than do non-identical twins; non-identical twin brothers are virtually as different physically and mentally as are non-twin brothers, and, as a result, their interactions with their parents are as different as are those of non-twin brothers. Thus, the 50 versus 20 per cent could well be, at least in part, a function of the difference in familial environment of identical and non-identical twins.

Indeed, one could argue, though I would not, that this leaves open the possibility that heredity plays *no* role. This view would argue that environment *alone* accounts for the homosexuality of the twin with the non-homosexual identical twin brother and also the homosexuality of the twins who are both homosexual (and who shared an environment as nearly identical as was their shared heredity). Finally, this view would account for the 50–20 differential entirely in terms of the fact that identical twins have far more similar environments than do non-identical twins.

Having raised this possibility, I would quickly add that I do so for logic's sake and that I find it much more plausible that the differential is usually owing to one non-identical twin's meeting the physiological necessary condition and the other's failing to have this physiological factor.

The important point here is that Bailey and Pillard's work—which is of the utmost importance in its suggestion that there is an hereditary psychological *facilitator* for homosexuality—does not demonstrate, and the authors do not claim that it demonstrates, that homosexuality is ever caused by heredity *alone*. Their work does strongly indicate, however, that heredity does play a role and that the stronger the hereditary factor, the less "environmental push" is required.

Much of the complexity we have discussed falls away if we think of the hereditary element as quantitative, not qualitative—as rendering homosexuality more or less likely in a given environment. This is what Bailey and Pillard do, and it is only for questions of assessing normality that the issue of an hereditary *determinative* factor becomes important. The work of Bailey and Pillard tells us that heredity is very important and that some males are likely to become homosexual with only a slight "environmental push," while others are not likely to become homosexual even in a strongly "homosexuality-producing environment" (whatever that should turn out to be). It may or may not be the case that some individuals will not become homosexual *no matter what* their environments. The work of Bailey and Pillard does not tell us this.

Incidentally, there is a question whose answer is not clear: Why are 20 per cent of the non-identical twins of homosexuals homosexual when only 10 per cent of the general population is homosexual? Is it that their parents presented a "more than average homosexuality-producing environment," one that is facilitated by the hereditary tendency of the other twin? Is the 20 per cent simply a coincidence that would not occur if larger numbers of subjects had been used? Since only the expected percentage of adopted brothers in these families were homosexual, the 20 per cent figure would not seem to be a statistical artifact or one of those surprising, but expected, results inherent in the notoriously tricky world of probability.

The Question of Normality

THUS, the work of Bailey and Pillard does not alter the logic by which homosexuality would be judged to be psychologically normal or abnormal; the assessment must be based on the normality or abnormality of the environmental factors in the causation of the individual's homosexuality.

The Freudian explanation—which stresses the mother's (perhaps justified) contempt for an overly passive or overly aggressive father and the son's resulting refusal to accept the male role—is now often simply asserted away, not because it has been refuted, but for psychological and ideological reasons. What Bailey and Pillard do indicate is that the factors stressed by the Freudian are not often *sufficient* to cause homosexuality. Male A, low in the physiological predisposing factor, is highly unlikely to become a homosexual even if his parents are a Freudian nightmare. Male B, having a strong hereditary predisposition, will need only the slightest familial push to become a homosexual. Thus, the homosexuality of the son is not a clear measure of the environmental contribution of the parents, a fact that should reduce the guilt of even those parents who accept the questionable assumption that parental guilt is justified when there is a parental environmental contribution.

This does not, however, cast doubt on the Freudian explanation. The Freudians do not claim that those who encounter the Freudian environment will usually become homosexual, but rather that those who become homosexual will usually be found to have encountered the Freudian familial environment. (One who says that most nuclear physicists went to college is not saying that most people who went to college became nuclear physicists.) The Freudian is analogous to the allergist who determines that a patient's symptoms are the result of a bee sting; the allergist is not denying that most people—not being allergic to bees—

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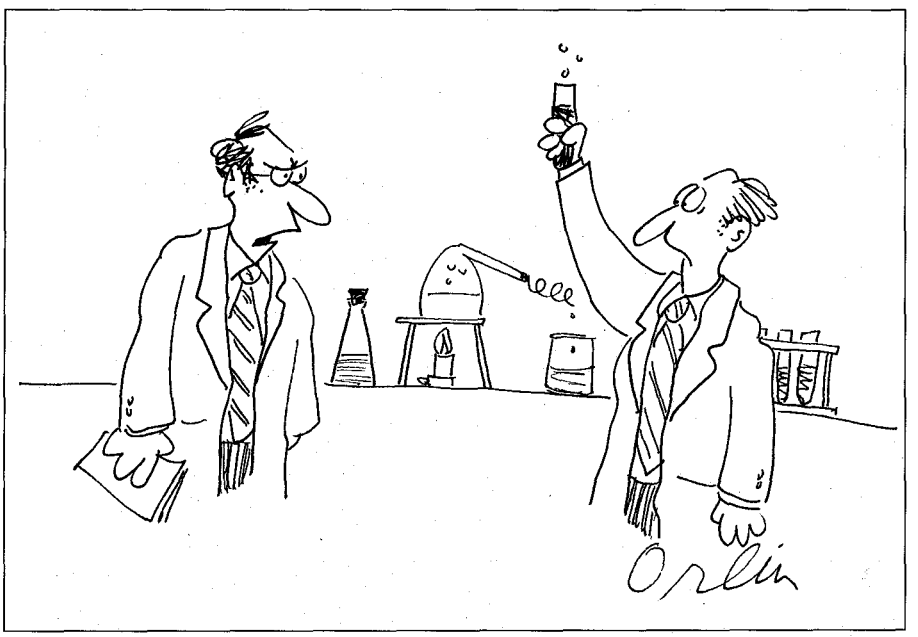

"Now you've done it, Mermelstein, creating life in a test tube! Another single-parent family!"

will not suffer these symptoms; he is merely saying that those who suffer these symptoms would not have been likely to suffer them had they not been stung by bees.

Weighing the Factors

TO OVERSIMPLIFY slightly (by treating the physiological factor as a necessary condition rather than as a facilitator): Homosexuality can be conceived as a series of "go"/"no go" steps, with a "go" required at every step if homosexuality is to develop. A person who lacks the physiological necessary condition (if there is such a condition), will not become a homosexual no matter what his subsequent environment. Another person, who meets the physiological necessary condition, will not become a homosexual if he encounters one series of environments, but will if he encounters another. This is now the implicit view of virtually all researchers who offer causal explanations of homosexuality.

There are many attempts to describe the environmental component. Alone among these, the Freudian view is complete in that—assuming we take the parents as givens—it does not raise further questions. Explanations stressing a childhood aversion to rough-and-tumble play, first childhood or adolescent sexual experience, being "labeled" a homosexual, and the like—while possibly identifying contributory factors—fail to explain why there is the aversion to rough-and-tumble play, why the first experiences are disproportionately often *homo*sexual, or why the individual exhibits the behavior that makes labeling possible.

Completeness is, of course, worthless if a theory is incorrect. But virtually all alleged refutations of the Freudian explanation are based on studies using a less discriminating methodology than that supporting the Freudian. (It is worth noting that the studies I refer to as supporting the Freudian view are not therapeutic studies or others about which the non-Freudian is justifiably dubious; they are more discriminating studies of the type used by those who incorrectly claim to refute them.) A non-null finding is *not* refuted by a null finding of a study using a less discriminating methodology; the usually correct explanation for the disagreement is that the former study used a methodology capable of discriminating what it was looking for and the latter did not. E.g., if you measure men and women with a ruler capable of measuring to the nearest inch and I do the same with a ruler capable of measuring only to the nearest yard, you will correctly conclude that men are taller, while I will not.

There is one environmental factor that, as homosexual spokesmen have demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt, cannot explain an American's homosexuality: positive societal sanction. That is, even if it were true (which it is not) that some societies positively sanctioned general adult male homosexuality, this would not explain an American's homosexuality. There is nothing inherently abnormal about preferring peanuts to popcorn, but, if a society ostracized peanut eaters and rewarded popcorn eaters, one would ask what caused the peanut eater to risk ostracism.

Now: questions of psychological normality are always in part non-scientific. They are scientific questions in that their answers depend on an understanding of causes and functions of the behavior if an assessment of its normality is to be made. They are non-scientific questions in that such an assessment is being made.

Thus, one can invoke the non-scientific aspect to reject the very act of making an assessment of normality. But this encounters two fatal problems.

1. Such a denial forces one to deny *all* assessments of normality, not merely of homosexuality, but also of coprophilia, necrophilia, and a host of other behaviors not clearly harmful to oneself, others, or society. Obviously, this is not what the homosexual spokesman wants. He does not want an absurd, if logically defensible, denial of the validity of the very concept of normality, but an acknowledgment that homosexuality is normal, while the other behaviors are not. To do this, he must reject the opportunity to deny the validity of all assessments of normality and he must be able to demonstrate that the Freudian is incorrect in his explanation of homosexuality.

2. More important to the happiness of the homosexual is an answer to this question: Is the greater frequency in homosexuals of depression, general unhappiness, and other undeniably undesirable tendencies a function only of social ostracism or also, perhaps primarily, of factors inherent in the development of homosexuality? At one time, homosexual spokesmen denied that there was any difference between homosexuals and heterosexuals other than in choice of sexual partner. This argument was surrendered even before the evidence required because it ignored the fact that it is only the negative *effects* of social sanctions that would lead anyone to be bothered by such sanctions.

One major study attempted to answer the question by studying societies with varying attitudes toward homosexuality. It found that the degree

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of tolerance was unrelated to the rates of depression, unhappiness, and the like. Astonishingly, the authors of this study concluded that this demonstrates that tolerance is not enough; equal acceptance is required if the rates of pathology are to decline. This is logically possible, but as improbable as a logical conclusion can be. What this evidence far more plausibly seems to imply is that social ostracism has little to do with the correlated behavior (which is a function of the same processes—whatever they are—that generate the homosexuality). And if this is the case, discovery of the environmental causal mechanism might well render possible the alleviation of the pathological companions of the homosexuality.

Assuming that knowledge of a determinative *physiological* causal factor would also permit alleviation of the pathological companions of the homosexuality, I too wish that there were a physiologically *determinative* factor, one that would refute the Freudian explanation and all explanations in which environment plays a role. Such a finding would demolish all attempts to term homosexuality "abnormal." But wishing does not make it so, and evidence like that provided by Bailey and Pillard indicates that such a physiologically determinative factor will not be found. □

Peace in El Salvador

AN AMERICAN VICTORY

The general end of the cold war contributed, but so did a specific and steadfast Reagan policy.

ELLIOTT ABRAMS

THE PEACE treaty signed by the government of El Salvador with the Communist FMLN constitutes a great victory for Salvadorans, and for U.S. foreign policy.

In January 1981, just before Ronald Reagan took office, Jimmy Carter junked his foolish Central American policy. Reacting to continuing Sandinista subversion of neighboring El Salvador, Carter suspended U.S. economic aid to Nicaragua and ended his cut-off of U.S. military aid to El Salvador. Carter recognized that without U.S. help, El Salvador could fall to a small, armed Communist group just as Nicaragua had fallen in 1979.

Reagan policy in El Salvador had two parts. First, the FMLN had to be prevented from achieving a military victory over the government. A large military-aid program was established, with the aim of increasing the size and competence of the Salvadoran army. Second, political reform was needed in the country, to prove to its citizens that their grievances—against corruption, injustice, oppression—could be redressed within the system. Both parts succeeded. It became clear that the FMLN would never achieve a military victory, as their colleagues in Nicaragua had done, and successive elections in El Salvador began to produce a more open political system. Military rule was replaced by the government of an elected reformist president, José Napoleón Duarte of the Christian Democratic Party. Ultimately, the Christian Democrats were defeated in free elections, largely because of public revulsion at their corruption, and replaced by the conservative ARENA party. The Bush Administration maintained the Reagan policy, providing military aid and supporting democratic politics. As in the Reagan years, the Administration has had to fight off the Democrats in Congress, whose desire to slash aid to El Salvador has long been the FMLN's only hope.

Meanwhile, the worldwide "correlation of forces" was turning against the Communist side. The FMLN leaders saw Violeta Chamorro win an election in Nicaragua, watched Soviet policy begin to give up on adventurism in Central America, and finally witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union itself. Soon after Leninism collapsed in Moscow, it collapsed in San Salvador, and the FMLN signed on the dotted line. Now they will try their luck at the ballot box, where they can be expected to get enough votes to put their aging leaders into congressional seats, but not enough to win power. The fiercest debate within the FMLN today may be about what to call their new political party in the next elections, now that phrases like the "People's Liberation Front" are passé.

Skeptics look across the border at the continuing instability in Nicaragua and wonder if the Salvadoran agreement will prove any better. It will, for the great flaw in Nicaragua is that the Sandinistas still control the army and police. With their monopoly on force, they have a veto on Mrs. Chamorro's moves and have often killed opponents who threatened their hold on power. In El Salvador, the government maintains the monopoly on force, and the FMLN will be forced to rely on peaceful protests. It must integrate itself into the country's new democratic system if it is to have any influence at all.

Another Sort of Foreign Aid

OF COURSE, the FMLN will not be without resources in the U.S. and in Europe. Every time the Communists lose an election, there will be plenty of American congressmen prepared to scream "Foul!" and ask for yet another aid cut. When FMLN protests turn violent, as they are bound to do sooner or later, there will be plenty of editorial writers ready to denounce the government for "overreacting" rather than pin the blame on "demonstrators" using guns. And no doubt there will be enough Swedish and French aid projects to provide cash for FMLN political activities. But in a very few years, El Salvador may be able to slough off much of this foreign advice and cure itself of a terrible disease the Communists inflicted upon it: dependence.

El Salvador in the 1960s and 1970s had a fast-growing economy, and Salvadorans are renowned in Central

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America for their hard work. As the military challenge, and the guerrillas' destructiveness, grew, El Salvador became utterly dependent on American handouts. Now, if peace returns, flight capital and foreign capital may return also, enabling the country to start producing again. Like Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, it may benefit from the Caribbean Basin Initiative and establish new garment industries and free trade zones. President Alfredo Cristiani is committed to market-oriented reforms, and may now have the chance to show that they work. Even the most grateful and pro-American Salvadoran must yearn for the day when his country's policy can be made at home, rather than in collaboration with Washington. If the Salvadorans are lucky, relations between the two countries will turn from official matters of "policy" to trade and investment issues decided in the free market.

There are over one-half million Salvadorans in the U.S., migrants who began to arrive after the 1969 "soccer war" with Honduras. (It was a leftist canard that Salvadorans started coming only when the guerrilla war heated up in the 1980s.) As El Salvador is the most densely populated country in the hemisphere, it is foolish to think these immigrants will all soon return home to start farming. If some begin to go home, bringing with them the skills and capital they acquired in the U.S., that will be a healthy injection into the local economy. Still, the vast majority will wish to remain here, and their remissions will be critical for El Salvador. The U.S. must face the question of their legal status during the coming year.

El Salvador's decade of guerrilla war cost thousands of Salvadoran lives, and those of eight Americans. The violence is ending now in part because of the collapse of Communism throughout the world, but more because Communist efforts to take power by force were resisted and defeated. In this small corner of the cold war, American policy was right, and it was successful. □

Conservative Questions

OF MEN, HOGS, AND LAW

If natural law does not permit us to distinguish between men and hogs, what does?

HARRY V. JAFFA

IN 1854, in perhaps the most moving and compelling exhibition of natural-law reasoning in all political history, Abraham Lincoln began:

> Equal justice to the South, it is said, requires us to consent to the extending of slavery to new countries. That is to say, inasmuch as you do not object to my taking my hog to Nebraska, therefore I must not object to your taking your slave. Now, I admit this is perfectly logical, if there is no difference between hogs and Negroes.

Under the laws of the slave states, black slaves were both persons and chattels. But a person is defined as possessed of a rational will, and a chattel is a movable property without any rational will of its own. By the laws of reason and of nature, a person cannot be a chattel, and a chattel cannot be a person. In 1854, by the positive law of the slave states, and of the United States (because of the fugitive-slave provision of the Constitution), a slave was held to be both person and chattel. In the speech mentioned above, Lincoln exploited this contradiction to the utmost. He pointed out, incidentally, that although there were hundreds of thousands of free Negroes in the United States, there were no free horses or cattle—or hogs. He also pointed out that not only were slaves governed by rules not of their own making, but they were governed by an entirely different set of rules from the ones that governed their masters. If this was not unjust, he said, nothing was unjust.

Rule of Law

THE equality of man, pronounced in the Declaration of Independence, affirms that there is no difference between man and man, such as there is between man and beast (on the one hand), or between man and God (on the other), that justifies one man ruling another without the other's consent. Those who live under the law should share in making the law they live under, and those who make the law should live under the law they make. Here is the central idea of the rule of law, arising from the very constitution of God's universe.

Because human beings are not gods, no man is permitted to be a judge in his own cause. Because mere humans are called upon to judge other humans, conviction for crime should be subject to all possible safeguards against bias and error, and punishments should be neither "cruel" nor "unusual." Because human beings are not gods, the powers of government not only should be limited but should be divided, checked, and balanced, and tenure of office should be subject to frequent elections.

These are only the rudiments of the natural-law tradition embodied in American constitutionalism. Unfortunately, these rudiments did not become very clear in the Senate hearings on the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court of the United States. Unfortunately, they became if possible even more obscure in Ernest van den Haag's "Not Above the Law" [*NR*, Oct. 7, 1991]. As an invincible positivist, Mr. van den Haag has always denied the existence of that objective basis of moral knowledge which constitutes the natural-law tradition. He is someone who without hesitation denies any logical force to the moral argument condemning the regime of slavery. Without this argument, however, I do not know what case reason can make

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for limited government and the rule of law, or indeed for human civility or human decency. Without this argument I do not know what case reason can make against the despotisms of our time, more terrible even than chattel slavery. After all, despotisms *do* work—for the advantage of the despots. Stalin died in bed, enjoying despotic power to the end. What argument can our positivists and relativists put forward, to say that he was wrong? □

I do not doubt that the authors of the Declaration of Independence, Abraham Lincoln, and Harry Jaffa all believe that their views derive from natural law. I don't—although I share many of the views.

Nature permits us to behave in many ways, e.g., enslaving one another or treating one another as equals. Nature does not tell which is morally preferable or socially preferred. We do; we honor moral norms and, by legislation, impose some on ourselves. We might find the ultimate source of our moral norms in Scripture and/or believe that God reveals them through (teleological) nature, which, therefore, is given prescriptive authority—although its prescriptions, as detected by scholars and statesmen, appear to differ greatly depending on the interpreter.

For those who accept Divine authority, it matters little how God's commands are revealed. However, for those who do not, or who claim independent authority for a secular government such as ours, nature can have no authority. (Indeed nobody has explained where this authority comes from if not from God.) Nature gives us choices between good and evil, between having Nazism or Communism or neither, between keeping slaves and freeing them. God tells us which choice to make and believers accept His authority. But nature has no such authority except for those who believe that it reveals God's will. For unbelievers and for a secular state, nature merely lets us know possibilities and the consequences of our choices, without telling us what to choose. Hence, unlike Harry Jaffa, I believe that our constitutional principles, indeed all secular principles, must stand on their own merits, as we determine them. We add nothing if, as the Founders did, we claim that nature does (or does not) want us to have the principles we decide on. —EvdH

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Touch of Genius

CHARLTON HESTON

THE POST OFFICE in St. Helen, Michigan, was still in the back of the cobblestone general store I remember from when I was a kid and you remember from the movies. There was nothing in the box one day but another script, from Universal. It was called *Badge of Evil*. I started to read it that evening, and finished it the next morning—an okay police story. As I'd promised, I phoned the studio. "It's not a bad script," I said. "But police stories are like westerns: you guys've been making them for more than fifty years—all the great ideas are used up. It really depends on who's directing. Have you set anyone?"

"Well . . . no, actually. [*Pause, then brightly:*] We've got Orson Welles to play the heavy, though."

Now I paused. Could they really not have thought of the obvious? "Why don't you ask him to direct, too? He's a pretty good director, you know." Well . . . you'd have thought I'd suggested that my mother direct the film.

"Oh! Ahh, yes, *Citizen Kane* and . . . umm . . . yes. Interesting. It would be, that is. To direct. For him . . . ah, to direct. The film. We'll, ahh, get back to you. On that." Whereupon I hung up, bemused.

They did get back, a few days later. Yes, Orson would direct the film. I have no idea how intense the debate was, but I doubt anyone at Universal slapped the back of his head and said, "*Of course* he should direct! How come we didn't *think* of it? What a smart guy that Chuck Heston is." More likely it was, "Ahh, let him direct it. How bad can it be? Heston'll just get sore if we don't. F---in' actors."

I was delighted. It seemed to me, remembering *Kane*, that we had a chance at a great film. That's a chance you don't get very often. Getting the great film is even rarer. (*But you sometimes get to try, pal. You get to try.*)

I talked to Orson at length on the phone, before we left Michigan, and then met with him after we got back to L.A. He swung open the door of the house he was renting, a looming figure in a flowing black Moorish robe from his *Othello*. I was taller than he, but he filled the room, with his voice, his energy—with himself. His "Hello, Chuck!" rolled twice around the entry hall. He gave me a very large single-malt whisky splashed with water and mesmerized me for an afternoon.

He was three days into a rewrite of the entire script, which he finished a day and a half later. It was a vast improvement, most interesting to me in that he'd turned my character into a Mexican attorney. I'd played several Brits, but this was my first non-Anglo (though God knows not my last).

His name was Vargas, we decided; the very bright first son of a wealthy Mexican family, educated at USC and Harvard Law, on the fast track for high office in his country. None of this was in either the script or the picture, but, inventing his background, we could begin to invent the man. The next day I began growing a moustache, to be dyed black, along with my hair. The make-up department darkened my skin to suggest Hispanic genes. Orson ordered a suit (the action in the film is almost continuous; there are no wardrobe changes) made by the best Mexican tailor in Los Angeles. A first-class Mexican tailor cuts a coat a little differently from his counterpart in London, or New York.

All this gave me how Vargas looked. What about an accent? I took the easy answer: "He's very well educated, mostly in the U.S., he comes from a bilingual family; he speaks perfect English." That was lazy of me, and wrong. No one speaks perfect English, and no one not raised speaking it is totally without an accent. Henry Higgins was right; a speech expert can tell within miles where a man was born. If I had the part to do over, I'd try for the faintest stroke of emphasis and rhythm you might hear from an internationally educated Mexican, instead of my native Midwestern Yankee. It would've been a good creative challenge, and right for the part.

I don't recall that I shared this internal debate with Orson. Had I undertaken the accent, I've no doubt he would have supported me; that I was considering it may never have crossed his mind. He was buried in the prep for his film.

IT HAD become his film, of course, as I had expected and Universal had perhaps feared. He planned to shoot on both sides of the Mexican border, where the story was laid. Universal pulled the plug on that; they were probably wise to do so, though it did them no good in the end. Thwarted, Orson responded with his usual resourcefulness in adversity; he shot all his border-town exteriors in Venice, California, an hour from the studio. It looks marvelous, better than anything we could have found on the border, and logistically far easier.

The casting went well and easily, though our budget of less than a million dollars for the whole film left little money for the actors. Nevertheless, they all wanted to work for Orson, in the first film he'd directed in Holly-

This piece is excerpted from Mr. Heston's autobiography, due out in 1993 from Simon & Schuster. The full work will include the controversy over the editing of Touch of Evil.

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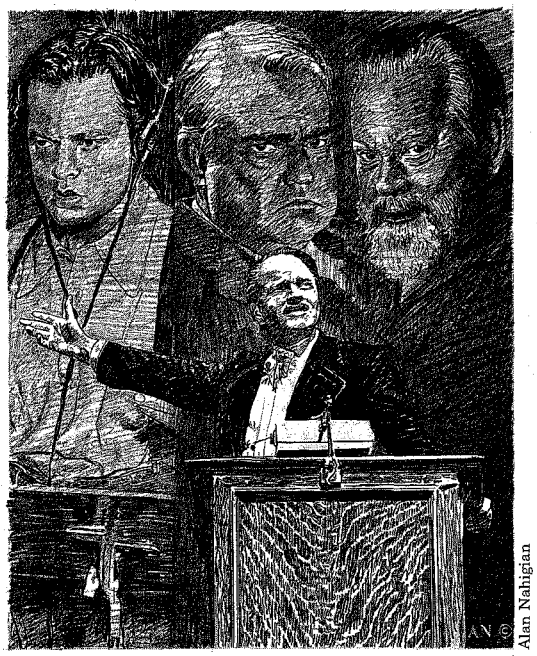
wood in ten years. Several of his old Mercury players came on board: Ray Collins, Joe Calleia, and Joe Cotton in a cameo. Marlene Dietrich played a very spooky gypsy, wearing one of Elizabeth Taylor's black wigs, and I was responsible for a key casting. Dennis Weaver was just finding fame in *Gunsmoke*; I called him up and persuaded him to play a crazy motel-keeper for us. He was wonderfully eccentric. Janet Leigh was set as my new bride; very good, even with a broken arm. She wore the lightest possible cast for filming, discarding the sling during takes. A gutsy lady.

Orson came on the picture with a reputation for extravagance dragging after him like the chains clanking behind Marley's ghost. He didn't deserve it. He had his flaws as a filmmaker, but waste and inefficiency were not among them. Still, he knew he had to make the studio believe in him. He did this very resourcefully. The Sunday before shooting started, Orson called some of the actors to his house for an undercover rehearsal of the first day's work, a sound-stage interior of a tiny apartment. The next day, Orson began laying out a master shot that covered the whole scene, including two-shots, close-ups, over-shoulders, and insert shots. It was a very complicated set-up, with walls pulling out of the way as the camera moved from room to room, and four principal actors, plus three or four bit players working through the scene.



Alan Nahigian

On any movie set, the production department gets a call from one of the ADs, reporting when rehearsals on the first shot begin, when the first take is made, and when the first print is recorded. Lunch came and went and we were still rehearsing the shot; no camera had yet turned. Studio executives began to gather in uneasy little knots in corners, a bit daunted about approaching Orson while he was cuing an extra's move just as the tracking camera picked him up. They were also very worried. Most of the first day gone, and no film exposed yet.

About four o'clock, Orson called for a take, the first of a good many. Just after six, he said silkily, "Cut! Print the last three takes. That's a wrap on this set; we're two days ahead of schedule." He had designed his master to include all the coverage he needed in the 12-page scene, scheduled for three shooting days. All this was planned, of course, to astound Universal, which it surely did. It was also a fine way to shoot the scene.

The front-office people never came near the set again. They kept hoping for another miraculous 12-page day. The never got one, but Orson had persuaded them: even if he did get into trouble, he could get out of it. Looking back, I think he relished it. There was a little of Wellington after Waterloo: "A close-run thing, sir—a damn close-run thing." I won't say he deliberately painted himself into corners, but he did love leaping out of them. I remember a scene driving an open convertible down an alley in Venice, doing several pages of dialogue.

In 1957, they still shot moving-car scenes in a breakaway car with the front off, the camera shooting past the actors at a process screen of traffic footage. Orson decided to shoot it in a real car, driving down a real alley.

Nowadays, of course, that's a piece of cake. The film's faster, the lights are half the size, so are the mikes and cables. When Orson's cameraman had the shot rigged, the back of the car was crammed with batteries and the recording unit, with cables twisting around the seats to mikes taped on the dashboard, and the camera was strapped to a wooden platform on the hood, with no room for even the camera operator and the sound mixer. Someone suggested cutting the front off the car and towing the rear half behind a truck large enough to carry a crew. Orson snorted. "Nonsense! These boys can shoot it without a crew."

And so we did. With a crash course in switching on both camera and sound, I drove down the alley half a mile to our start mark and said, "Turn over."

Mort Mills, my partner in the scene, flipped the right switches, checked the appropriate dials and said, "Speed." (*Technical note: Nobody* ever *says "Lights, camera, action!" on a movie set.*)

I gunned the car and yelled, "Action!" as we tore off, acting away. We had a marvelous time. We'd get down to the end of the alley and Orson would say, "How was it?"

"Perfect!" I'd say. "I'd like one more." It was my first experience of the heady bliss of directing a film. By the time I'd done three takes, I felt like D. W. Griffith. As a matter of record, this was the first time a dialogue scene was shot in a moving car.

THE OPENING shot of the film was an even more spectacular example of Orson's alchemist ability to transmute adversity into art. He took the introductory montage written to establish Janet and me in the border-town setting, and made what's been called the greatest boom shot in the history of the movies. Here's how it goes: Close-up on hands holding a bomb, setting timer; ticking starts on soundtrack, continuing behind as the camera booms up over building, follows a scurrying figure down alley, dropping closer as man opens trunk of parked car, drops bomb inside, runs off as laughing couple comes from bar, climbs in, and drives off. Camera follows, holding car in full shot, picking up Heston and Leigh walking arm in arm,

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dialogue establishing their recent marriage. We pick up car going through border checkpoint, drunken girl complaining of ticking in her head. Car drives off, Heston and Leigh pass checkpoint, dialogue with guard conveys Heston's Mexican-government status. Newlywed banter, Heston kisses Leigh, as bomb explodes offscreen.

It was technically an all but impossible shot, depending on precise timing, not only from Janet and me, the couple in the car and the passing extras, but most critically of all, from the boom grip (the man running the boom) and of course the camera operator. Today, a remote-controlled camera on the end of a Python boom would make the shot far easier to prepare and not nearly as hard to shoot. Then, it was a wonder.

They started lighting in mid afternoon and had it ready to rehearse when darkness came. We shot on it all night, with various things going wrong, most often the actor playing the IRS guard at the border crossing. He had only a line or two, but it must have been terrifying for him to see the whole company bearing down on him from a block away. When we'd get to him, he'd flub his lines. At last, as dawn began to lighten in the east, Orson said to him patiently, "All right, let's do it once more. This time, if you aren't sure of your line, just move your lips—we can dub it in later. But whatever you do, please God *don't* say, 'I'm sorry, Mr. Welles.'" That's the take that's in the movie.

More than half the picture was shot at night in the alleys, canals, and crumbling corners of Venice, a curious homage to the Italian original. Parts of it look like a Salvador Dali landscape. One night, preparing a showdown scene in a hotel lobby between my crusading Mexican prosecutor and Orson's corrupt cop, he was fuming at the slowness of the lumbering elevator. Suddenly, he stopped, transfixed. You could almost see the cartoon light bulb glow over his head. "Chuck," he said, as the elevator finally sank to lobby level, "would you see if you can run up the stairs to the third floor before this thing gets up there?" I did. (It was a *really* slow elevator.)

Orson then laid out the scene with me arguing with him in the lobby, he bundling his cronies into the elevator and starting up, talking all the way, only to open the door and find me waiting at the top. Again, not tough to do today, but a real killer shot in 1957, with light and sound cables hanging three stories down the elevator shaft.

Later that same night, Orson and I were peeing into a drain down in the basement of the hotel. He looked at the dank cellar clutter around us and said, "Wouldn't this be a great place to do that scene in the file room with you and Joe Calleia?"

"It sure would," I said, zipping up. "But isn't that scheduled for Friday, back in the studio? They'll have the set built by now. Besides, Joe isn't even called tonight. It's 2 A.M.; he'll be dead asleep. We've got three more pages to shoot up on the third floor anyway. That'll take the rest of the night."

"Nonsense!" said Orson, his eyes gleaming. "I can wrap that scene in two set-ups. It'll take them that long to get Joe down here anyway. He'll be better if he's confused—that's what the scene's about."

He was right. He finished the upstairs scene before Joe got down to Venice, muzzy with sleep. He stumbled through the scene, Orson harrying him—it played wonderfully well. So did the cellar.

He was also very good about sharpening your focus on the scene you were doing that day. Even with a great part, you're not likely to have more than three or four really great scenes, which you get to work on for maybe a week of the whole shoot. A lot of the time you're getting on and off horses, or in and out of cars, or someone else's good scenes. Orson could somehow persuade you that this next set-up happened to be one of the key shots in the whole movie.

Though I don't think he was a great actor, he could give you an actor's insight into the process. He told me something very casually once that's been permanently valuable to me. "You know, Chuck," he said as we finished looking at several reels of dailies, "you should work on your tenor range. All of us with these deep bass voices tend to rumble along like organs. You've got to use the high end, too. The tenor range has a knife edge; your bass is a velvet hammer. Use them both." I've tried to do that ever since.

We finished the film early on April Fool's Day, killing Orson on the junk-littered bank of Venice's solitary canal, just before the sun rose. We were one night over our thirty-day schedule and $31,000 over our $900,000 budget. We celebrated over ham and eggs in an all-night coffee shop, with a bottle of Lanson champagne Orson had in his trailer.

I lifted my glass to him. "I think it'll be a hell of a picture, Orson. You did waste some time, and a little film, trying to conceal the fact that you had the best part. I knew that. The movie is about the fall of Captain Quinlan." He looked at me quizzically for a moment, then rumbled with laughter.

"You're quite right, my boy—that was stupid of me." He burst out in a happy roar: "Well, now I don't have to worry about it in the cutting room."

TOUCH OF EVIL, as it was eventually titled, was released in 1958, to only fair business but excellent notices and a couple of festival prizes. Over the years *Evil* has become a cult film, much admired, as it should be. It's certainly not a great film, like *Citizen Kane*, but it is immensely imaginative and provocative—among the finest few films of a hugely gifted filmmaker. *Cahier du Cinéma* probably got it right when they called it "the best B movie ever made." I'm very proud of the film and of working for Orson. I'm also proud I was responsible for his directing the last film he made in this country, or for a major studio. I'd have worked for him again, given a chance.

What do I think of Orson Welles? I think he was the most talented man I ever met, which doesn't mean I think he was the best actor or the best director. I don't. But whatever we mean by "talent"—I suppose it's a

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label we put on the capacity to create art—Orson had, in spades.

Maybe he had too much of it. It often seemed so easy for him to come up with a marvelous solution for a scene—almost off the top of his head. Maybe he sometimes only used the top of his talent and then got bored with the endgame. It's been said that Hollywood owed Orson more than they gave him; perhaps he owed them more, too. He never lost his spirit, though. In the last year of his life, he was holding court in the Bistro, in Beverly Hills, when an intense young man approached him, almost genuflecting in awe at his work, particularly *Kane*. "There's one thing, though . . . I've always w-wondered about," the man stammered, abashed. "In the l-last scene, when Kane's dying and he . . . he drops the glass ball, you know, and he says 'R-Rosebud'? Ahh, there's no one else in the room. So how . . . how do they know those're his last w-words?"

Orson looked at him a moment, then put a massive hand on the back of his neck and drew him close. "You must *never*," he rumbled softly, "repeat one word of what you have just told me to a living soul." □

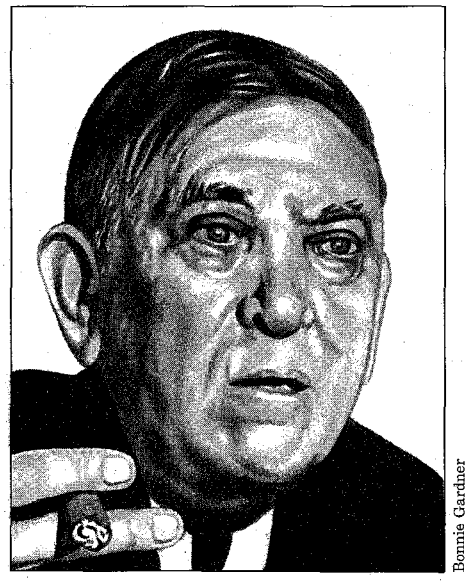
Guaranteed Insensitive

TERRY TEACHOUT

LITERARY historians usually think of H. L. Mencken first in connection with *The Smart Set* and *The American Mercury*. In fact, Mencken spent his entire professional career as a newspaperman. All else, including the founding of the *Mercury*, was secondary. From 1904 to 1948, with time out for two world wars, Mencken labored for the Baltimore *Sun* papers in various capacities, doing everything from writing unsigned editorials to negotiating labor contracts. He wrote a daily editorial-page column from 1911 to 1915 and a weekly editorial-page column from 1920 to 1938. Most of Mencken's best-known essays began life as newspaper stories of one kind or another. But most of the three thousand pieces Mencken wrote for the *Evening Sun* and other papers have remained uncollected to this day. "In the columns of the *Evening Sun*," Mencken wrote, "I can say anything I please. I tackle subjects there that are never mentioned in other newspapers . . . and yet most of it is buried in their files. To be sure, I occasionally dredged out extracts from it for my Prejudices books, but they were few in number and of relatively little importance."

The Impossible H. L. Mencken: A Selection of His Best Newspaper Stories, edited by Marion Elizabeth Rodgers (Doubleday/Anchor, 707 pp., $15 paper)

Now Marion Elizabeth Rodgers, editor of *Mencken and Sara*, an invaluable edition of Mencken's correspondence with his wife, has put together a fat and sassy anthology of Mencken's newspaper work. *The Impossible H. L. Mencken* is organized thematically, and the themes, as usual with Mencken, are familiar to the point of banality: the defects of democracy, the joys of life in Baltimore, the idiocies of



Bonnie Gardner

journalists, the dangers of trusting any politician farther than he can be thrown. But if Mencken's themes are—as Count Basie used to say of his band's repertory—"the same old beef stew," his variations are almost always as fresh as a farm breakfast.

Take, for example, a 1925 *Evening Sun* column with the unpromising title "Traffic": "There was a time when the American citizen was an idealist himself. Now he is only idealism's raw material, as a cow is the raw material of butter, ice cream, and custard pie—a stuff milked, tickled, clubbed, and pulverized into beauty by ordained virtuosi." Or this tart postmortem on the 1948 elections, written only two weeks before Mencken's career was cut short by a crippling stroke:

> Truman . . . assumed as a matter of course that the American people were just folks like himself. He thus wasted no high-falutin rhetoric upon them, but appealed directly to their self-interest. Every one of them, he figured, was itching for something, and he made his campaign by the sempiternal device of engaging to give it to them. . . . If he did not come out for spiritualism, chiropractic, psychotherapy, and extrasensory perception it was only because no one demanded that he do so. If there had been any formidable body of cannibals in the country he would have promised to provide them with free missionaries fattened at the taxpayers' expense.

The Impossible H. L. Mencken is not perfect. It is to begin with, a bit redundant. "Most of the classics," Miss Rodgers says, "have been repeated, as no collection of Mencken would be complete without them." That means the original versions of such widely anthologized essays as "Valentino," "The Sahara of the Bozart," and "Bryan"; it also means several less well-known pieces that have already appeared in books edited by Mencken himself and by subsequent hands. This deliberate repetition is a mistake, since most potential readers of *The Impossible H. L. Mencken* will already own *A Mencken Chrestomathy*, *The Vintage Mencken*, and various other Mencken collections that have appeared in the last four decades. Miss Rodgers also has devoted far too much space to Mencken's presidential-convention coverage (172 pages, slightly less than a quarter of the book) and not quite enough to his volcanic editorial-page thumbsucking of the Thirties, the decade of the despised "Roosevelt II."

Mr. Teachout, formerly on the New York Daily News *editorial board, is at work on a biography of H. L. Mencken. His latest book is* City Limits.

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As for the uncollected material here, none of it is boring, but none ranks with Mencken's finest work. Not that this is Miss Rodgers's fault. H. L. Mencken was a compulsive reviser, and he rarely let any of his newspaper work get into his own collections without reworking it extensively. While Mencken enjoyed working under pressure ("I am at my best," he said, "in articles written in heat and printed at once"), it was through careful editing that he put the clinching gloss on his best essays.

Taken as a whole, *The Impossible H. L. Mencken* has a slightly miscellaneous air that might have been avoided had Miss Rodgers stuck solely to, say, Mencken's editorial-page columns for the *Sun* papers, arranged chronologically. Alternatively, she could have attempted to carry out Mencken's own plan for a sequel to *A Mencken Chrestomathy*. Mencken accumulated, by his own reckoning, about twice as much material for the 1949 *Chrestomathy* as went into the finished product. This material now reposes on a shelf in the closet of the Mencken Room of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, dusty and forgotten. Somebody should do something with it.

But enough quibbling. The collection (save for a boorish introduction by Gore Vidal) is sure to give pleasure.

The Next Mencken Controversy

A YEAR AGO, on the 35th anniversary of H. L. Mencken's death, the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore—under the terms of Mencken's will—unsealed *My Life as Author and Editor*, a 400,000-word autobiography that Mencken worked on from 1942 until he was incapacitated by a stroke in 1948. It had lain unread in five boxes ever since.

Last September, Knopf announced it had chosen *Washington Post* book critic Jonathan Yardley to edit the work and provide an introduction. Knopf editor Ashbel Green expected to have bound books by mid 1993. But publishing is a world of blown deadlines and forfeited advances, of orphaned manuscripts and long-promised *magna opera* that never appear. Mencken fans may have licked their lips when they heard the news, but they certainly weren't holding their breath.

The enterprising Mr. Yardley, however, told me that he had already cut the manuscript from 400,000 words to 175,000, written an introduction, and submitted it to Mr. Green. The publishing date has been moved up, and it is rumored that we will have four hundred pages of never-before-seen Mencken by next January.

My Life is a collection of profiles and autobiographical reminiscences covering Mencken's years in the magazine world, particularly with the *Smart Set*, which he co-edited with George Jean Nathan from 1914 to 1923. The narrative breaks off in 1921. *My Life* is thus no systematic recounting of Mencken's years at *The American Mercury*; that period is covered only in short sketches and notes. (It is humbling to consider that, had Mencken brought the project to completion, it would have reached about a million words—i.e. the length of 15 full-length novels.)

According to Averil Kadis, director of public relations and "Mencken representative" at the Pratt, there is some overlap with the autobiographical pieces Mencken wrote for *The New Yorker* between 1936 and 1943, which were collected as *Happy Days*, *Newspaper Days*, and *Heathen Days*. "But there's a lot of new material here, too," says Miss Kadis. "The first manuscript we gave Yardley is full of wonderful information on Mencken's contacts with F. Scott Fitzgerald, Joseph Conrad, Sinclair Lewis . . ." She adds that there is a detailed account of the 1934 Gridiron dinner in Washington, where the usually thick-skinned Mencken suffered the worst humiliation of his life when FDR read vituperative passages about journalists from Mencken's editorial "Journalism in America"—without attributing it, so all the luminaries present were left under the impression that the President was excoriating Mencken. It must have been a rout: the evening gets only one sentence in the *Diaries*.

Mr. Yardley says the best pen-portraits are of Theodore Dreiser, Ezra Pound, the critic James G. Huneker, and the Irish-American novelist and risqué autobiographer Frank Harris. Some figures—Sinclair Lewis, for instance—appear only outside the text itself, in appendices; Mr. Yardley has woven them back into the narrative. "Mencken seems to have considered the portraits secondary to his descriptions of his own life in the magazine world," he says, "but I've decided to let the portraits speak."

Still, what will probably draw the most scrutiny about the new volume is its tone. *My Life* is said to be even less guarded than the *Diaries*, which in 1989 caused a nationwide literary firestorm—particularly for Mencken's suspect attitudes toward Jews. Scholars working on sealed Mencken manuscripts at the Pratt are not allowed to discuss their contents in any detail, but Mencken biographer Terry Teachout confirms that *My Life* can be described as "hair-raisingly candid."

According to Mr. Yardley, "People who took offense at some of Mencken's characterizations in the *Diaries* are going to take offense at *My Life as Author and Editor*." Mr. Yardley defended Mencken against charges of anti-Semitism when the *Diaries* first appeared, but adds, "Now I'm more ambivalent. Mencken was certainly an anti-Semite by the standards of our time, and certainly not an anti-Semite by the standards of his own. I think we ought to give him the benefit of the doubt." He considers the issue irresolvable, but thinks he has a responsibility to present all the evidence: "I've bent over backwards *not* to expunge any material that might offend people."

Surely Mencken would have approved of that. The debate still rages over whether he wanted his diaries published, but Mencken scholars say that he hoped *My Life* would see print. Unlike the *Diaries*, *My Life* provoked no acrimony among the Pratt trustees. "Certain indications in the manuscripts," says Yardley, "leave no doubt that Mencken wanted—or at the very least expected—to see it published."

Now he will get his wish. One is reminded of the last interview Mencken ever gave, to the *Baltimore Sun*, on January 26, 1956, just three days before his death. He was alert and animated, looking forward to seeing his newest book, the aphoristic *Minority Report*, which had just been sent to the printers. He remarked: "It will be good being denounced again."

—CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Mr. Caldwell is Assistant Managing Editor of The American Spectator.

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Even at his second-best, H. L. Mencken was a not-so-minor miracle. How tonic it is to quaff this stiff dose of hundred-proof irreverence in an age when insensitivity, real or alleged, has become the last hanging offense. □

Licensed to Pill

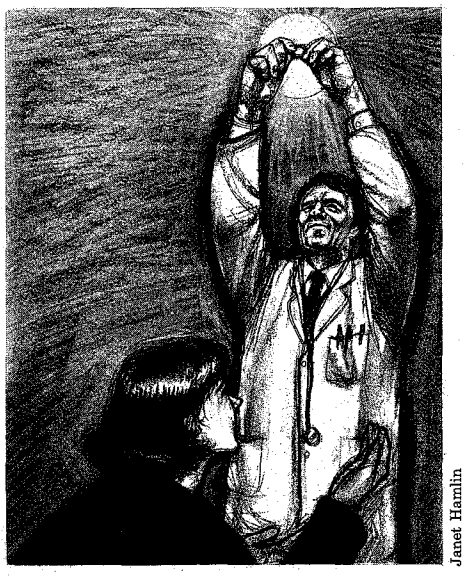
BERNARD NATHANSON

THE recounting of a monumental scientific breakthrough by the central figure in the project is a genre with a long and mostly honorable history. Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* is, perhaps, the paradigm of this art. In more recent times one recalls James D. Watson's *The Double Helix*, an account of Watson's Nobel Prize–winning work with Francis Crick on the structure of DNA. This book was not only a graceful, lucidly written retelling of a remarkable scientific odyssey but also an exciting narrative of the byzantine politics of science, the interplay of restless clashing minds, and the powerful intellectual rhythms of researchers working in the heady stratospheres of basic science research.

The 'Abortion Pill': RU-486, by Etienne-Emile Baulieu (Simon & Schuster, 238 pp., $22)

Now Etienne-Emile Baulieu, the developer of the drug RU-486, has labored and brought forth (with Mort Rosenblum as *accoucheur*) *The "Abortion Pill."* The offspring, regrettably, is premature, misshapen, and altogether uncomely: the style is by turns hortatory and pontifical; the narrative line is herky-jerky; the argument is unbalanced and lumpy, tilting constantly toward abortion advocacy. The book is an unrelentingly braggadocio account of Baulieu's heroics in battle against the Roussel-Uclaf Corporation, the French government, the World Health Organization, and all the other forces of darkness that have resisted his efforts to loose this largely untested, potentially dangerous medication on the world.

The drug RU-486 was designed in 1980 but the clinical trials have barely begun: for a drug which has its principal action on the female reproductive system, three years of clinical trials and eighty thousand trial subjects is merely the first step in a lengthy research protocol to establish not only the drug's effectiveness but, equally important, its safety—both short-term and long-term. Although Baulieu indulges in an unseemly amount of smarming over the poor pregnant women in the Third World, he fairly salivates over the prospect of testing his new toy on these naïve subjects. If I as a practicing physician have difficulty comprehending the workings of this pill and the risks involved, try to imagine a field-tester attempting to extract an informed consent from an illiterate pregnant Bangladeshi farm worker. This scenario evokes memories of the infamous Willowbrook experiments in the 1950s, in which live



Janet Hamlin

hepatitis virus was injected into the mentally retarded children at the Willowbrook Institution on Staten Island. The project was designed to study the natural history of hepatitis, and the families of the children were assured not only that there was no danger involved (actually hepatitis is an especially lethal illness, and survivors run a substantial risk of cirrhosis of the liver in later life) but that the live virus was good for them.

Nor does Baulieu give much space to those who have preceded him in the search for a consistently effective abortifacient drug. For example, he is evidently unfamiliar with the intriguing work of Dr. Michael Levi et al. at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in the late 1960s. Levi published a provocative article in the *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* in which he described a substance he called Malucidin (an extract of yeast), which when tested on mice caused the dissolution and resorption of the mouse fetus without affecting the maternal uterus. After five days of intravenous injections of this substance into pregnant mice the rodent offspring disappeared, leaving no detectable trace of fetal elements. Mercifully, Levi's project lapsed, for reasons which remain obscure.

Baulieu rejects out of hand the lesson of the catastrophic DES experience—namely that drugs which act on the female reproductive system can have transgenerational tragic results. Diethylstilbestrol was a synthetic female hormone (RU-486 is also a synthetic female hormone) administered to pregnant women between 1935 and 1960 in the mistaken belief that it would halt a threatened miscarriage, and that it would also be of benefit to pregnant diabetics. Millions of women were prescribed this medication after repeated assurances that it was safe. Not only did it prove therapeutically ineffective, but a significant number of the daughters of women who used it turned up 10 to 15 years later with a particularly ferocious variant of cancer of the vagina, directly attributable to the hitherto unsuspected carcinogenic activity of the drug on the developing female reproductive tract. RU-486 has had no long-term proof of transgenerational safety. With his arrant disregard for the dismaying history of medical catastrophes, Baulieu resembles the Bourbon kings: they learned nothing and they forgot nothing.

Another matter that Baulieu scants is that he is not even the designer of RU-486. Dr. Georges Teutsch deserves the credit for this grim accomplishment; Baulieu's name does not appear on the patent. In the book he says little of the squalid turf wars he has conducted with Teutsch over recognition for development of the pill.

Politically, the book is exquisitely

Dr. Nathanson is a clinical associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at New York Medical College and author-producer of The Silent Scream.

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correct. There is hardly a page without reference to the necessity to preserve reproductive rights for women, to protect freedom of choice and control of women's bodies, and all the rest of the tendentious litany of the radical feminists—not the language of a scientist in search of scientific truth.

The same tone pervades Baulieu's description of the players in this great drama. Sheldon Segal of the Population Council is warm-hearted and clear-thinking. Dr. Jean Bernard (a Baulieu ally, and a member of the French National Ethics Committee) is witty and sage. Dr. Catherine Euvrard (a neurobiologist crony of Baulieu's) is gifted. Abortion opponents, on the other hand, are lumped together as religious zealots, frenzied lunatics, activist extremists, ignorant and malicious dissidents. Like Lawrence Lader (a co-founder with me of the National Abortion Rights Action League in 1969) Baulieu sees the Catholic bogeyman everywhere. In one bizarre turn in his book he links a protest in Paris against Scorcese's film *The Last Temptation of Christ* with the resistance of the Roussel Corporation to exporting RU-486 to the U.S. (at NARAL, we used to say that the only good Catholic is a bad Catholic).

Baulieu is unapologetic in his determination to introduce this pill into the U.S., and to that end he falls back on the specious, now-familiar appeal that RU-486 is not just an abortion pill but possesses magical powers to cure an endless host of other ailments. The list is impressive, and includes: endometriosis, meningiomas (a rare type of brain tumor), Cushing syndrome (a disorder of the pituitary gland), depression, hypertension, Alzheimer's disease, obesity, glaucoma, breast cancer, post-term pregnancy, and severe wounds and burns. It begins to sound a little like Dr. Potter's Snake Oil.

As one who has consulted the original references in the medical literature in an attempt to validate these extravagant claims, I can assure you there is not one shred of scientific evidence to support them. As an example, of those women with breast cancer who were treated with RU-486, the rate of survival was uninfluenced by the drug; the length of survival was similarly uninfluenced by the treatment. In short, the only proven consistently effective function of this drug is to promote abortion.

There are many medical and scientific inaccuracies and contradictions in the book. At one point Baulieu indicates that oral contraceptives (birth-control pills) do not block ovulation; 31 pages later he states that ovulation is suspended by "the pill." In describing suction abortion he states that dilation of the cervix before inserting the suction device may take several hours. Anyone who has ever done a suction abortion (I have done or directed over 75,000) knows that cervical dilation is a matter of a minute or two. The book disappoints also in its failure to provide a scientific bibliography. The lack of this is especially disquieting in that there is not a single original-source reference against which one can check the validity of the various claims made in the text. This omission is quite unforgivable, especially in a book that is so heavily weighted with erroneous medical allegations.

If you want to know more about RU-486, you'd be well advised to consult Lawrence Lader's *RU-486: The Pill That Could End the Abortion Wars and Why American Women Don't Have It*, published last year by Addison Wesley. If you can forgive Lader his preposterous title and his still-verdant paranoia about the Catholic conspiracy to plunge the world back into the Middle Ages, you will find in this book a simple, lucid explanation of what RU-486 is and how it works. (In fairness, Lader has updated his obsessional conspiracy theory to include the fundamentalist Protestant sects, now terming them the "Catholic–Fundamentalist fanatics").

One final note: despite his ideological servitude to the side of abortion advocacy, Baulieu boldly states rather early on: "Abortion stops life." Right.

Gavel it. Next case. □

FILM

Despair Not

JOHN SIMON

Alan Nahigian

BRUCE BERESFORD goes from extreme heat to extreme cold, and from strength to strength. Close on the heels of *Mr. Johnson*, based on Joyce Cary's novel and made in remotest Africa under unusual rigors, comes ***Black Robe***, shot in the wilds of freezing Canada under no lesser hardships, and no less a masterwork. Indeed, this film, with a screenplay by Brian Moore from his own novel, may be an even greater artistic triumph. But the public does not want serious films: *Mr. Johnson* disappeared from the theaters almost immediately; *Black Robe*, so far just managing to hang in there, does so because its subject appears superficially less controversial.

The time is 1634, and the French under men like Champlain are conquering Nouvelle France, the future Canada. Meanwhile Jesuit priests are trying to convert the mutually warring Algonquins, Iroquois, and Hurons to peaceful Christianity. Young Father Laforgue, from an aristocratic family in Rouen, was inspired by seeing the mutilations wrought by the Indians on an older priest, a priest who can hardly wait to return to Quebec. Now Laforgue sets out from Quebec, together with another young Frenchman, Daniel, and an escort of Algonquins, in four canoes; the aim is relief for Father Jérôme at his distant outpost among the Hurons, whence no word has come in a long time. If Jérôme is dead, Laforgue is to take over; back in Rouen, his mother had

Mr. Simon, NR's film critic, is also theater critic for New York *magazine.*

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rejoiced in the family's acquiring a martyr: "God has chosen you to die for Him."

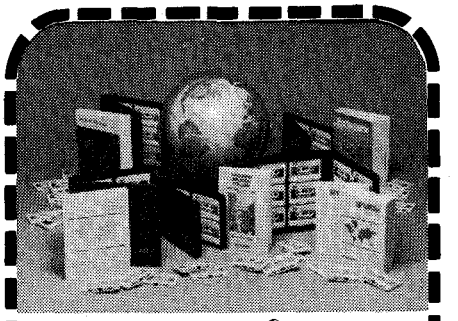
The canoe expedition is led by the Algonquin chief, Chomina, whose wife and lovely daughter, Annuka, are also along; soon Daniel and the girl are exchanging significant looks and curt but loaded words. The Indians call the Jesuits Blackrobes, and the film begins brilliantly with a screenwide shot of blackness that begins to move and proves to be Laforgue's cloak seen from the back. What better visual metaphor for ambiguity? Paddling up the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, amid an austerely sumptuous autumnal landscape of wooded hills, Chomina and Laforgue get to understand each other less and less. The priest's reading from a book (the Bible) confirms the illiterate Indians in the belief that he is a demon, as does his baptizing of a dead baby. The Algonquins believe in dreams, animals, animistically worshipped nature, dead warriors hunting in nocturnal forests, and a hideous dwarf shaman who counsels them to kill the black-robed demon in their midst.

Laforgue zealously reads his Scriptures, talks fervently but uncomprehendedly, and becomes prey to yearnings of the flesh as he watches Daniel and Annuka falling in love and coupling with the reluctant consent of Chomina. Tensions grow, and the Indians abandon Laforgue in the wilderness, though Chomina won't let them kill him. Even Daniel follows his love in his own little canoe at a just barely safe distance, for the Algonquins, other than Annuka, don't want him around either. The Jesuit continues alone, on foot, just as the bloodthirsty Iroquois start popping up all around.

I will not continue with the story, which gets fiercer, deeper, more emotionally and intellectually involving with every frame. Sex and violence, torture and heroism are there without embellishment or exploitation, depicted with intensity and economy as phenomena of nature—or human nature—that have their beauty, their horror, their occasional humor, and their seemingly permanent, impenetrable mystery. Indian language (with subtitles) is used sparsely, as is English, but most of the story is conveyed in actions and images of astonishing starkness, lyricism, trenchancy. Nothing is emphasized, yet nothing is less than compelling. Two antithetical cultures with their conflicting motivations keep confronting each other, subdividing into even trickier antagonisms and loyalties, with nature always all around, turning wintrier and snowier as clashes intensify, a love affair lurches ahead, and every major character undergoes extraordinary, shattering changes.

Perhaps the most moving aspect of the film is its refusal to take sides, its avoidance of easy—or, indeed, any—solutions, coupled with its ability to speak volumes with a few monosyllables (friendly Indians who save Laforgue lost in the forest, "How can anyone get lost here? The woods are for men!"), to express history with images (Peter James's superb shots of a land of cold, harsh magnificence), and to encourage the viewer to think without any buttonholing and hectoring. Nothing is shortchanged on either side of the religious-cultural fence: generosity and intolerance and an understatedly ironic questioning of the seemingly noblest motives—all are given their full self-contradictory due. The film is so totally in command of itself that a birchbark canoe scraping aground on suddenly unnavigable ice is just as dramatic and fraught with meaning as a man's finger being cut off with promise of deadlier tortures to come. In a supreme final irony no one emerges a long-range winner in this or any world; only feelings have value, however transitory, however doomed.

Indians in movies, to this day, have been noble or ignoble savages, food for one or another kind of mendacity and sermonizing. Here they and their beliefs come to extraordinary, absorbing life, as do Catholicism and its representatives, though neither party gets the final nod. The actors, white or red, are mostly Canadians and mostly unknown to us, which works very well. We do know Lothaire Bluteau from *Jesus of Montreal*, where, like the film itself, he was dreadful; as Laforgue, he conveys movingly the uncertainties lurking under religious certainty, even as the remarkable August Schellenberg (half Indian, despite his name) subtly suggests the doubts that infiltrate the strong Chomina. The beautiful Sandrine Holt (Annuka), though a trifle too pretty, and Aden Young (Daniel) are good, too; she especially, with a wonderful toughness under her exquisite exterior.



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Even the neatly interpolated flashbacks to France, fitted in with masterly matching shots, make their sardonic points laconically but powerfully. And Moore's dialogue accomplishes the best and hardest thing movie dialogue can do: full characterization through minimal palaver. The audience must participate with its own intuition, inferences, insight. With *Black Robe* and *Mr. Johnson*, Bruce Beresford proves himself conclusively not just an Australian director who can speak to the world, but a world director able to direct anywhere (an almost unique achievement) and speaking to everyone, Australians, naturally, included.

■ Peter Medak's ***Let Him Have It*** is the true story of an English court case that shook up the early postwar years. A 19-year-old Londoner, epileptic and not very bright, Derek Bentley, was drawn into minor crime by a precocious youth of 16, Chris Craig, leader of a gang of boys who had access to handguns and a fast life. Though Derek was far from a bad fellow, the guns, the girls, the aura of Chris's world were hard to resist.

In an attempted nighttime burglary, Chris and Derek were surprised by police. Soon the crazed, gun-wielding Chris confronted a policeman, Fairfax, on a dark rooftop. Fairfax shouted to him to hand over his gun. Derek, who had already given himself up, yelled out, "Let him have it!"—meaning the weapon; Chris took it as meaning a bullet: he shot and wounded Fairfax. Under-age Chris got away with a prison sentence; Derek, despite his own basic decency, his father and family's no-stone-unturned support, and the efforts of a few enlightened public servants, was—amazingly—hanged. There was no clemency from on high; conditions in England were bleak and tense, and unconducive to mercy.

Neal Purvis and Robert Wade have written a first-rate, no-nonsense script, and Medak has directed with heroic straightforwardness and empathy. The not-to-be-denied grandeur of the film lies in the humanity of the homely people depicted, the sublime dignity with which they struggle against the blows they incur for offenses hardly of their own making. Justice untempered by compassion, which crushes them, proves more abhorrent than awesome.

Although the method used is that of the feature film, the evenhandedness with which the story is told, the meticulousness rather than grandstanding with which scene after scene unfurls, the refusal to milk even the most legitimate of emotions invite comparison with the greatest cinematic documentaries. I am not the first to notice that Paul Reynolds does not quite possess the charisma needed for Chris; otherwise, a very large cast performs to—a word I do not use lightly—perfection. Many of the actors are old hands, many new to me; all are, down to those in the tiniest roles, flawless.

Chris Eccleston's Derek is an achingly real compounding of childlikeness and fallibility, likableness and mediocrity, trustingness and incomprehension. Chris's father, a man whose lowliness in no ways lessens his magnanimity, is played by the marvelous Tom Courtenay with acting that no longer seems to have surface of any kind, but is all utterly from within. In the much smaller part of Chris's mother, Eileen Atkins reveals herself yet again the supreme character actress of the English-speaking world; somehow, while sticking unconditionally to her role, she always presses forward to embodying the joys and sorrows of humanity itself. The scene in which the Bentley family huddles together in excruciated solidarity as the parlor clock strikes the hour of Derek's execution belongs in the pantheon of cinema as well as in every moviegoer's stock of memories.

But what actors the English have! Consider, for example, Michael Gough as Lord Goddard, the judge at Chris's trial. It is a very small and unsympathetic part, almost limited to reaction shots. Yet so good is Gough that, without the slightest underlining, he can make indelible the obtuseness, prejudices, obsoleteness of the establishment couched in the acrid decorum and seeming judiciousness of the judiciary. Or take a somewhat bigger part, that of Derek's sister, Iris. As played by Clare Holman with wry affection, and without a trace of glibness, glitter, or gush, Iris (whose real-life counterpart, the last of the Bentleys, still wages the fight for Derek's posthumous rehabilitation) emerges as a figure to tug at the very roots of our being.

Peter Medak, the Hungarian-born British director, first impressed us with the delightful satire *The Ruling Class*. Since then, he has made interesting movies that, for one reason or another, do not quite make it. But with *Let Him Have It* he is once again firmly in the saddle, directing with utmost simplicity and an unerring eye for detail. As long as there are films like this one and *Black Robe* to escape to from the highly touted but worthless hits of the day, nobody need despair. □

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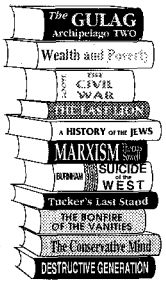

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(Continues on page 52)

Taki Theodoracopulos, who writes the "High Life" column for The Spectator *in London, is the author of* Nothing to Declare *(Atlantic Monthly Press).*

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TAKI

(Continued from page 50)

room for pleasure (even for low pleasures like betting on a horse), on the moral calculation that an idea of the good life could scarcely survive if we devoted ourselves entirely to the service of others.

None of this has anything to do with me. I gamble out of pure hedonism—the doctrine that pleasure is the highest good. But even the hedonist's creed has a secret codicil: the good life combines indulgence with discipline. And gambling does so in spades.

Back in 1980 I lost my London house on the spin of a roulette wheel. Gambling, you see, means just that: playing for keeps. For the dedicated gambler, there is no merit in moderation. And very few gamblers I've met have ever had any regrets about the time and money spent in the pursuit of Lady Luck's favors. In this guilt-ridden world of ours, full of introspection and doubt, this is rare praise indeed. The gamblers I know are happy people, and those with real kamikaze tendencies, the happiest of all. I guess the secret is a total disregard for money.

Disregarding money because you have oodles of the stuff doesn't count. The rich Arabs, showing off nowadays in various casinos in London, the Riviera, and even on these shores, are no gamblers. They are simple poseurs, because they risk very, very little. (Mind you, so did I when I lost my house. It was thrilling, and extremely painful afterwards. My father, however, was alive then, and as a responsible man took care of matters.)

The late unlamented Robert Maxwell was another poseur. I used to see him come into Aspinall's, London's premier casino, and in a loud voice place bets on roulette. He would say things such as "£3,000 pounds on number 26 and the neighbors, £30,000 total bet." But he soon stopped. The reason was the Arabs. These camel drivers had no shame. No sooner would Maxwell announce his bet than they would triple it without a word. It drove Captain Bob away from Aspinall's and into smaller establishments where he could be numero uno. But if that's gambling, I'm a banana.

The gambling principle is a marvelous thing. Show me a man who gambles, and I'll show you someone who is not a bore. But in order for it to be thrilling, it must entail the possibility of ruinous consequences—something just short of Russian roulette. The late lamented Aristotle Onassis was a bit of a cheater. He would at times yell *banco* at some astronomical amount being offered by the croupier. As with Maxwell, it was mostly for effect. He owned, or was majority stockholder of, the company that controlled the Monte Carlo casino. Onassis, however, was a terrific gambler in his business, and (unlike Maxwell) honest to boot, so his occasional showing off should be excused.

What is it that elates the gambler when he (or sometimes she) wins, and depresses him when he loses? (Men are far, far bigger gamblers than women, and the reasons are obvious. Very few women will risk the money for the baby's milk, but many men will.) The money is one reason. But beyond the material consideration lies the identification by gamblers of Lady Luck with—their mother. This is the theory of Professor Ernest van den Haag, a man who gambled when young in order to support himself but has stayed away from the green felt tables ever since. His knowledge is obviously not empirical, yet it makes sense. According to Professor van den Haag, the gambler constantly asks, "Do you love me more than the others?" When he wins, his euphoria is total. He is both richer and loved. When he loses, he continues to gamble because he has convinced himself this cannot be.

The theory makes a lot of sense. I feel chosen and preferred by fortune when I win, as if I deserved it for past good behavior. The opposite holds true when I'm losing. My mind races to try to remember what past sin I'm paying for, or it rages at the unfairness of it all. This is where superstition comes in. No gambler I have known has ever admitted that his system is irrational, yet all systems are. Totally. When I'm gambling I try to repeat every move, gesture, and thought I made and had before a winning bet. At one time someone accused me of giving signals because I was trying to touch every part of my face rather in a hurry. What I'm most superstitious about is showing pleasure when I win. I have yet to encounter a beamer who was a winner.

The most civilized game of chance is *chemin de fer*. It needs to be played among gentlemen, and good food and drink are important. In London the gaming laws have changed so that no drinking is allowed; thus I now gamble far less. The greatest game I ever played in was a *chemmi* that involved Lord Derby, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Lucan (who has since disappeared, after killing his children's nanny in mistake for his wife), Jimmy Goldsmith (as he was back then in 1970), Claude Beer, and Cubby Broccoli, the man who makes James Bond films. And a multimillionaire from Chicago, Emmet Blow. The game began at 11 o'clock in the evening and went on until 11:45 the next morning. It was in the beautifully ornate room of Aspinall's in Berkeley Square. Liveried servants plied us with caviar, champagne, and rare old whiskies throughout the night.

Derby was winning an enormous amount; in fact, he was the only winner. Yet he was the one who kept insisting on another and another shoe. Lucan was the first to quit, then Goldsmith. Broccoli, Devonshire, Beer, and I held fast. Then all of a sudden the game broke up. The Chicagoan had gone to the bathroom and collapsed. Aspinall announced that he had died. Derby said he was sorry but "let's play the last one." Aspinall said that if the papers got hold of the fact that we continued playing after the death of a punter we'd be run out of town. We reluctantly went home.

This was the bad news. The good was that Aspers had lied. He wanted to break up the game and Emmet Blow's passing out was a good excuse. When I saw Blow a week later dancing in Annabel's I would have bet 7 to 5 that he was a ghost. And Blow would have taken the bet. □

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TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney

1 E	2 A	3 L	4 S		5 H	6 B	7 G	8 T	9 D	10 N	11 M	12 I	13 O	14 C	15 F	16 L	17 E		18 D	19 N
	20 B	21 Q	22 M		23 F		24 C	25 G	26 L	27 I	28 R	29 T	30 J	31 K	32 B		33 C	34 G	35 O	36 A
37 H	38 P	39 L		40 E	41 I		42 S	43 J	44 A	45 M	46 Q	47 G	48 K	49 L		50 B	51 H	52 N	53 T	
54 E	55 B	56 J	57 D		58 C	59 I	60 A		61 B	62 O	63 T	64 S	65 G	66 E		67 N	68 L		69 O	70 R
71 J	72 E		73 T	74 M		75 R	76 F	77 H	78 Q	79 G	80 N	81 D	82 A	83 T		84 G	85 C	86 J	87 N	
88 H	89 D		90 M	91 F	92 E	93 P		94 F	95 D	96 L	97 I	98 C	99 K		100H	101N	102M	103Q	104C	105J
	106E	107T	108B		109R	110F	111G	112L		113H	114A	115N		116E	117F	118I	119O	120C		121D
122G	123P	124A		125F	126I	127L	128T	129P	130O	131G	132M		133Q	134S	135G	136K	137J		138A	139N
	140I	141R		142H	143J	144S		145D	146C	147K	148R	149B	150P	151F		152T	153R	154F	155B	156D
157P	158Q		159Q	160E	161L	162C		163I	164M		165N	166B	167O	168F	169T	170H				

DEFINITIONS

A. Midday dining companion (2 words) — 36 138 82 44 114 18 2 124 60

B. Casablanca, to George Bush (2 words) — 155 55 149 50 108 166 6 61 20 32

C. Near latitude 0° — 120 33 85 104 162 146 24 14 58 98

D. California park beloved of Ansel Adams — 57 95 89 9 145 156 121 81

E. Well organized Wesleyans — 1 66 54 160 106 72 40 116 92 17

F. Mike Ditka, when domineering — 154 15 117 76 125 110 23 94 91 168 151

G. Beyond implausible — 34 47 111 122 79 7 135 131 84 65 25

H. Histrionics — 142 51 77 88 113 100 37 5 170

I. Man from, e.g., Budapest — 163 126 118 27 12 59 140 97 41

J. Daystar's light — 137 43 105 86 143 30 71 56

K. U.S.–Japanese concern — 31 147 48 99 136

L. Unwanted interruptions — 161 96 49 68 39 26 3 127 16 112

M. Eli's home (2 words) — 74 22 90 45 102 11 164 132

N. Al Haig to Woodward and Bernstein, some say (2 words) — 80 115 101 139 165 87 10 19 52 67

O. Abortion-clinic survivors — 167 130 69 35 62 13 119

P. Scriptural name meaning "gift" (2 Sam. 7:2) — 157 129 38 93 123 150

Q. Costume jewelry — 158 21 133 103 46 159 78

R. Sifting for gold — 75 28 148 141 70 153 109

S. Monastery or convent — 134 64 42 144 4

T. Hoover Institution et al. (2 words) — 83 128 73 107 152 53 63 29 169 8

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. **See page 51 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.**

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Dear Ronald

NEW YORK, JANUARY 8

Mikhail Gorbachev took the time—on the day he resigned his office and, so to speak, officially declared the USSR dead—to write a personal letter to Ronald Reagan.

The whole exchange has a certain piquancy. Consider. Ronald Reagan is the man who ordered theater nuclear missiles to be deployed in Europe, stripping the Soviet military of any possibility of nuclear blackmail. It was Reagan who, by calling for a Star Wars defense, augured the end of any possibility of a successful first strike. And, not least, it was Reagan who designated the world over which Gorbachev was called to preside as the Evil Empire. For Gorbachev to write a friendly letter to the man whose policies enhanced the forces of dissolution at work within the Soviet Union is extraordinary to begin with. To do so on the day that all Gorbachev's remaining dreams were extinguished is on the order of exhibiting a Stockholm Syndrome, writing pleasantly to one's captors. But now listen to what he said.

"These days I keep thinking of what has been accomplished over the past years. They have been filled with a stream of events, some no small achievements, and tough trials. All has not worked out as one would have wanted. And yet I hope that the historical process will put everything into proper perspective." We have here a burst of fatalism, but also ("the historical process will put everything into proper perspective") a touch of the determinist to the end. Perhaps Lenin was wrong only in suggesting that the iron laws of history would bring Communism in the twentieth century—perhaps it will need to be a dream, fulfilled some time in the future.

"It fell on you and I to make the first and perhaps the most difficult steps on this path [to unity]." The Kremlin had obviously removed from Mr. Gorbachev knowledgeable English translators. But here the historical determinist steps into human shoes, and says that the path toward the end of the cold war was pioneered by himself—and by Ronald Reagan. He seems to be saying that there were qualities unique in both of them that made it possible to synchronize their efforts.

"In my future activities I intend to be instrumental in ensuring that what you and I started together is not lost, but have a worthy continuation. Raisa Maximovna and I are sending our warmest greetings and sincere wishes of all the best to Nancy. Chances are we will meet again in the future. We would be very pleased if that were to happen."

Here Gorbachev lapses almost totally into the idiom of Amy Vanderbilt etiquette, but note the continued insistence on the personalities that effected the important changes. In America, enemies of Ronald Reagan were busy saying that he uniquely could never understand the Soviet Union because he was too inflexible in his habits. That criticism of Reagan was left-ideological. And Gorbachev does not give time to his own critics, who point out that he wasted three precious years by attempting to maintain socialism in the Soviet Union, as also imperial control over the republics. He is saying, simply: You and I were primarily responsible. He is exactly correct, Gorbachev and Reagan were primarily responsible.

Mr. Reagan's reply was characteristically generous and warm ("You have our greatest respect and admiration for the dignity and grace you have demonstrated during these obviously trying times"). And the invitation to come on over was characteristically Californian, concluding, "and, if your schedule permits, we would enjoy the opportunity to take you to the Reagan Presidential Library, which chronicles many of the historic steps we walked together."

On the role of Gorbachev, Peter Rodman is most eloquent: "Mikhail Gorbachev will go down in history as the man who destroyed the Soviet system, by mistake." Above all, "he refrained from systematic resort to the brutality of the past. On this point he stood his moral ground, and for *that* in a perverse way he may even deserve [his] Nobel Peace Prize. Only in a Soviet leader, however, can it be considered an exemplary act to refrain from murdering one's own people." Still, he did not, and he emerged, a personal friend of Ronald Reagan. □

Yeltsin Confused?

NEW YORK, JANUARY 3

The tensions, politics versus economics, are wonderfully revealing at this moment. Mr. William Safire wrote a splendid, prescient column the day before Mr. Yeltsin took Russia away from wage and price controls. What he said was that television viewers and many readers would hear only howls of protest, and these have come in very loud and very clear. One television channel showed a middle-aged man telling the world how much better life in Russia was ten years ago. If you live in Sing Sing, you don't need to worry about getting enough food.

Those of us who are tempted to be patronizing about the Russian people's self-evident ignorance of the principles of the marketplace should reflect on our own ignorance. New Yorkers are very nearly as mutinous as Muscovites over a rise in the subway fare from $1.15 to $1.25. New Yorkers should know that high prices tend to happen when a facility is run by the public sector. But even though capitalism is as old in America as anywhere else in the world, there is an entirely insignificant lobby in New York City arguing for privatizing the subways. And of course Muscovites need to learn that privatizing agriculture is indispensable to plenty. They could buy their potatoes a lot cheaper ten years ago—if they could find any, which they sometimes could do, after waiting in line for an hour or two.

What no one knows is, how much can Mr. Yeltsin take? He will have to acknowledge that public sentiment is much more important than it used to be. Indeed, it was public sentiment that kept him from getting shot last August. And he knows that he needs very quickly to privatize agriculture before the people can reap the great harvest of free farming. But there isn't anything in capitalism that will make a potato grow faster than it is accustomed to growing. So how much time does Yeltsin have?

The contrast is especially piquant at this historical moment, because at the other end of the world was George Bush, President of the Bastion of World Capitalism, and Mr. Bush was explaining, or rather trying to explain, to Australians who would like to have a chance to market their agricultural products in the United States why the United States

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gives our farmers huge subsidies, which are the equivalent of a tariff wall against imports of food. The reason Mr. Bush gave was that this is the only way we can protect the farmers from the enormous subsidies the farming fraternity receives in Europe.

One hopes Mr. Yeltsin wasn't listening in to that broadcast, because it would then be his challenge to understand the capitalist syllogism as follows: 1) Food becomes abundant to the extent that government gets out of the act. 2) Government gets into the act in Europe. Therefore, 3) government should get into the act in America. These are obscurities Mr. Yeltsin should be shielded from, before he goes crazy with frustration.

On the other hand, he will feel, even intuitively, the political point. President Bush, in his interview with David Frost, said that he would "do anything to be re-elected." One hopes that he meant he would do anything to be re-elected, consistent with the principles of the Republican Party. But then there is the difficulty in knowing exactly what are the principles of the Republican Party these days.

Some of the platitudes of liberalism are going to have one hell of a workout in the days ahead. Give me liberty or give me death? . . . In Algeria, having fought free from the French, who gave Algerians pretty good government for over a hundred years, the people were instantly taken in hand by a dictator. He was followed by a second dictator. Suddenly the reins relaxed and there was a free election and—fundamentalist Moslems are threatening to come in. It looks as though the ladies will be shrouded up, and nobody will be free to drown his/her sorrow in wine (no wine—choppee hands off if caught). So what are they protesting in Algeria these days?

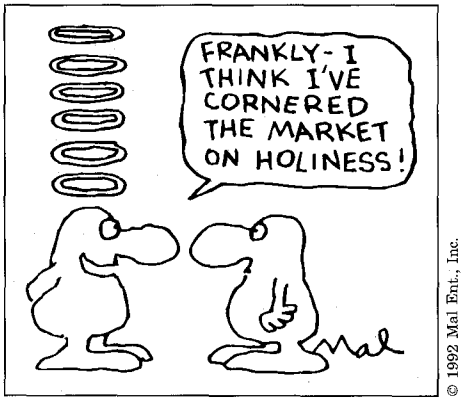
Democracy.

Don't blame Yeltsin if he is confused, as he leads his great country to democracy and capitalism. □

Ringing Out the Old

NEW YORK, JANUARY 1

When Paul Weiss left the department of philosophy at Yale University the sense of loss was quite universal, even among those students and faculty who cared not a fig for the discipline. What loomed was not only the loss of a primary scholar, founder of *The Review of Metaphysics*, but of a presence that, so to speak, filled the university, blasé though Yale was. For all that he dealt professionally with theory and thought, he was the Jewish teacher who sometimes brought to mind Jimmy Durante—the entertainer, you will remember, who if necessary in order to make his audience laugh would take an axe to his piano. Paul Weiss would kill—will do so—to communicate to his students what he wants them to learn and what they will be glad for having learned, having learned it from him. He was also the professor who, trained by the great and aloof Alfred North Whitehead, found the company of students as engaging as that of savants, so that he was always at home to everyone, to talk about Socrates or about love. A stupid but inflexible rule required him to leave



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Yale, and the academic question of the year was: Who would get him?

Ironically, Catholic University of America won out. The irony is that Professor Weiss is not a Catholic—God has a few questions left to answer before Paul Weiss is ready to take that step. But at CU he flourished. He was responsible for more PhD dissertations than any of his colleagues. As recently as one year ago he was voted the best professor in the graduate school. And he became, on CU's campus as on Yale's, something of a celebrity.

Then . . . then, quite suddenly, odd things began to happen. He had an operation for something or another, but managed to slip it all into a vacation period, so as not to get in the way of his academic commitments. He now uses canes to get about, as did his colleague at Yale Professor Theodore Greene, who used them all his life. His hearing probably isn't as good as Madonna's, but he has no trouble hearing his students, none of whom have recorded any substantial complaints. Inquiring reporters have no greater problem talking to him than to Johnny Carson.

But suddenly, last fall, age became the abstract factor. And Professor Weiss was suddenly informed that he could teach one class at home for one-quarter the pay he would normally receive. Messages between the administration of Catholic University and Paul Weiss and the affronted legions of friends and students have been in the nature of negotiations between Serbia and Croatia: the sky is black with communications back and forth, and always they get nowhere, for the simple reason that the university can't bring itself to say that it has decided that Age Kills. This datum is undeniable statistically, but has very little to do with any correspondence between age and effective pedagogy. Whitehead wrote his first philosophy book when he was sixty.

All of this back & forth would have consumed a great deal of Paul Weiss's time, except that he has been too busy, his new book, *Creative Ventures*, having just been published, giving him time to begin his next book (*Being and Other Realities*). And then he was recently elected to the Library of Living Philosophers, joining twenty such names as John Dewey, Bertrand Russell, and his old teacher Whitehead—but that didn't consume much of his time, as ceremonies are minimal.

So what happens now? In Washington there is an organization whose responsibility it is to enforce a civil-rights law passed in 1967 and sharpened in 1975, to protect the elderly from discrimination without cause. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has gone now to Catholic University of America, and word has it that the reverend gentlemen there have all of a sudden decided that Paul Weiss is not enough a scholar of Thomism to qualify to stay on as a teaching philosopher. Fast thinking—it required 25 years for CU to discover that Fr. Charles Curran was not enough a Thomist to continue to teach in the theology department.

So then what's the trouble? It is very sad when truly eminent men are treated shabbily. From time to time mobs are mobilized and regicides happen, and then for generations and indeed centuries there is that unstanchable sense of grief over a quite awful error committed. The administrators of the Catholic University of America aren't there to teach, let alone to practice, ochlocracy. Yet it is difficult to defend the conduct of scholars and gentlemen and men of the cloth suddenly treating one of the leading philosophers in the world as a pariah. Thank God there is nobody around calling what has happened anti-Semitic. But there are those around who are calling it anti-Christian. And it is up to the EEOC to ascertain whether a law has been violated. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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Visiting Miss Mary

THERE'S a moment in *Driving Miss Daisy* when one of my sisters found herself weeping. It was the scene in which Miss Daisy tries vainly to restore order to her "papers" and her grasp on the world around her. It becomes dreadfully clear that the fine old lady has finally lost it. My sister wept because she had witnessed an almost identical scene with a beloved aunt who had helped to raise us from early childhood.

Aunt Mary was always generous, occasionally cantankerous, and proudly independent. She loved to laugh, read, cook, and entertain. She took in strays of every kind; she became an accomplished attorney on her own merits long before Women's Lib; and, every winter, she threw breadcrumbs to the very pigeons whose cooing she cursed in warmer weather. To me and my siblings, who lost our mother early, she was as loving as any parent, and as amusing as any eccentric uncle. Her failing health hit us all pretty hard.

Matters were accelerated by the trauma of a broken hip. Mary had to go from the hospital to a nursing home. Even in the best-run nursing home, the initial shock of setting foot in the place—not to mention leaving a beloved relative there—is searing. At first glance, the scene seems one from Goya or Doré at their most nightmarish. The sunken, sometimes twisted visages of the inmates, the wheelchairs, walkers, catheters, and other accoutrements of age and illness, all add up to an unrelieved sense of devastation. You feel like an intruder stumbling into a cavern full of the aged and infirm mounting a knowing or unknowing death vigil.

For the first few weeks, daily visits to the "confused wing" housing the Alzheimer patients were an ordeal; one went away less conscious of having done any good than hoping for a quick, clean death when one's own time came. But that was only at first. With passing time much of what at first seemed Goyaesque became Dickensian. I came to recognize many of those sunken, shrunken figures, with or without all their marbles, as distinctive, dignified, and often spirited individuals.

The biggest lesson for me was the near indestructibility of *character*. Even when much of the mind is gone, generous people remain generous, the selfish selfish, the grumpy grumpy, and the gentle gentle. Mary still worries about falling behind in her office work ("Where are my papers?") or failing to have dinner ready for her guests. She also maintains her firm conviction that the world is both a funny and a dreadful place. This can lead to the occasional robust expression of convictions such as, "There ought to be a law against having children," or, "They ought to dynamite this whole damned place!" To the latter outburst, Camille, a dignified but slightly dotty nonagenarian, replied with calm assurance, "You would *never* use language like that if my mother were here!"

Perhaps her mother is. Dotage has its consolations. Every day at the nursing home, decrepit little figures in wheelchairs routinely perform mind-boggling feats of time travel. Elderly ladies and gentlemen regularly converse with long dead relatives, go shopping in department stores that closed their doors fifty years ago, or anxiously await 1928 election results. On good days, however, they can still recognize those they love and those who love them, and can still enjoy a joke, a chocolate, or an old familiar tune played badly on the piano.

One also comes to admire many of the nurses, physical therapists, and recreational staffers for their patience, compassion, and a maternal care that does not smother the dignity of its recipients. But what strikes me most is the spirit, the character, and what I would call the soul that stays stubbornly alive in their fragile, time-wounded charges.

FOR NEARLY three years now, some family member has visited Aunt Mary every day. Casual acquaintances find it odd, or chalk it up to Armenian family piety. Those who knew Mary well understand, but I think even they would be puzzled by the fact that there are days when I come away from visiting her feeling better, not worse.

Mary sits, slightly askew, in her wheelchair, looking like a pink pillow that needs fluffing up. She always greets me with a smile, usually followed by, "What took you so long?" When it is time to leave, her standard exit line is, "Time marches on." Every once in a while, however, she adds a surprise ending. Thus, on New Year's Day, she informed me—quite presciently, I thought—that "Time marches on . . . but nobody knows where it's going."

She gave a little chuckle as she said it, and it struck me that, if a person with much of her mind gone, confined to a wheelchair and attached to tubes, can maintain so much of her old humor, feistiness, and concern for others—sparks of warmth from a fading fire—I had no excuse for grousing about life's minor annoyances. Perhaps the 71st Psalm has it backward: "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth" is a fine sentiment. But, time and again, visiting Aunt Mary has strengthened my own resolve and left me feeling younger.

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Mr. Bakshian, a member of the National Council for the Humanities, writes on politics, history, and the arts.

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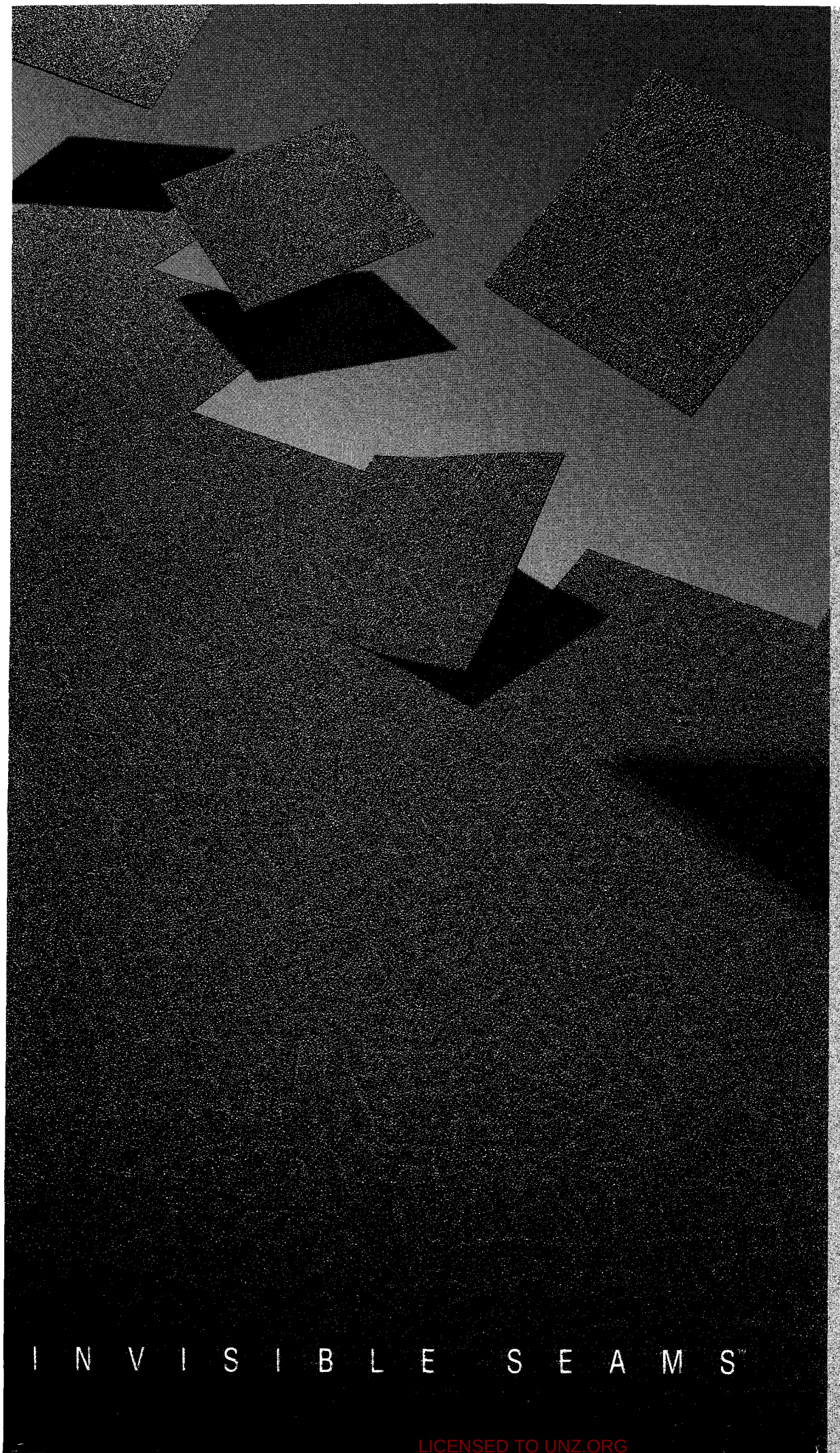

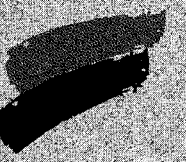

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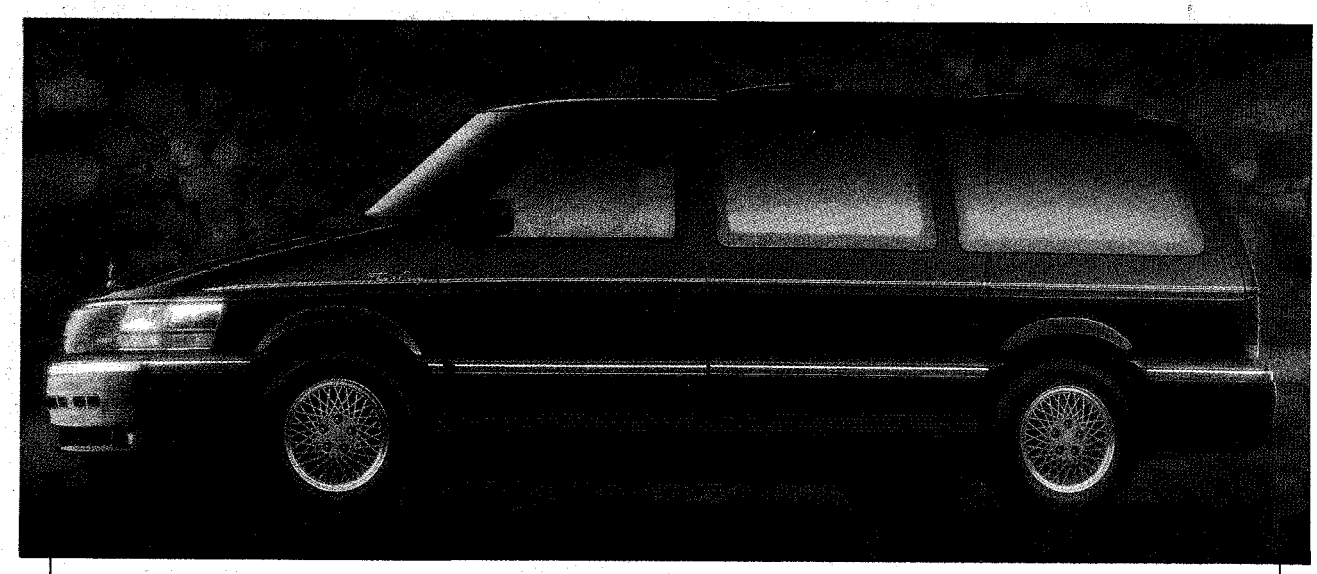

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